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*Yours Sincerely
Elisha Walton*

BALLADS. AND
MISCELLANEOUS
VERSES —

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BY

ELISHA WALTON.

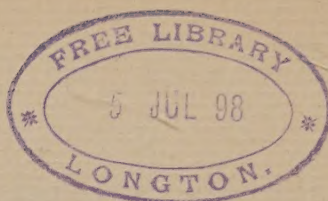
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AUTHOR'S NOTE.

The verses here submitted to the indulgence of the reader have been written in the leisure of a busy commercial traveller.

With a few exceptions they have appeared in the following magazines and newspapers, to the editors of which the author tenders his thanks.

The Staffordshire Sentinel.

The Staffordshire Advertiser.

The Staffordshire Knot.

The Staffordshire Evening Post.

The Potteries Examiner & Times.

The Archer Magazine.

The Muses Magazine.

The Lyric Magazine.

The Warwickshire Magazine.

The London & New York Annual.

Modern Poets.



PREFACE.

I'M not one of Poesy's great high priests,
Who sing by its altar fire ;
But only, at one of the lesser feasts,
An acolyte in the choir.

The Master hath deeper and holier things,
But they're hidden from me away ;
My lyre has only a few weak strings—
My song is a simple lay ;

But if only a few of the strains have power
To float for awhile along,
And brighten a wearisome leisure hour,
'Tis well I have sung the song.

ELISHA WALTON.

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HAPPY MUSINGS WITH A VEIN OF SADNESS—

SOLEMN VOICES WITH A TONE OF GLADNESS.

CLARE DE LAYN.

("The Fair Maid of Bucknall.")

SIR Leon De Layn was a grim old knight,
Of the turbulent days of old,
Who waged with the Saxon a lawless fight
O'er the moorlands rugged and cold;
His stronghold a massive and moated tower,
In its lonely solitude, stood
An outpost of Norman usurper's power,
On the verge of the Bucknall wood.

No man could handle his ponderous sword—
Was related at fireside tale—
All foes had he vanquished, save Highleigh's lord,
And the Abbot of Hulton Vale;
The power of Lord Highleigh he could not break—
And 'twas gall to the stern old man;
The Abbot he spared for his daughter's sake,
And his dread of the Church's ban.

Valiant in warfare, and stately of mien,
Was Sir Leon, though aged and sere;
Like falcon's, his glances were swift and keen,
And he ruled with the rod of fear;
Yet he, in his strong heart's innermost deep,
Ever hoarded a memory rare,
Of one who was slumbering death's cold sleep,
And a love for his daughter Clare.

The idol and queen of that warrior crew,
Was the beautiful maiden Clare—
Her eyes, and her hair, were of raven's hue,
And her face it was wond'rous fair ;
And numberless suitors, from far and near,
Did woo her with love's sweet powers,
But she had been secretly 'trothed a year
To young Harold of Highleigh towers.

And oft would she roam to their trysting place
In the neighbouring haunted glen,
Where once a young bard of the Norman race
Had been murdered by Saxon men ;
And where on the eve of St. Martin's day,
At the hour when the victim fell,
Was heard the refrain of the minstrel's lay,
In the depths of the sylvan dell.

*" Asleep in earth's bosom the flowerets lie,
Till wakened by April's rain ;
The birds which have flown to a sunnier sky,
Will return in the spring again ;
But loved ones when severed by death's dark woes,
Are asundered on earth for aye,
To meet where love's fountain eternally flows,
In the Land of the Far Away."*

*"Her lover's return my lady-love weeps,
With a lingering, yearning pain;
Alone through the night a vigil she keeps,
But her vigil is all in vain:
Sweet lady, thy lover returns no more
To gladden thy longing sight,
He waits thy coming on happier shore,
Sweet lady, good night—good night."*

Sir Leon oftentimes held troublesome fears,
When he gazed on his daughter's face
And traced in her eyes the heralds of tears,
That some grief in her heart had place;
But little he thought that her chosen mate
Was the son of his deadly foe;
And little he dreamed that the hand of fate
For his future was weaving woe.

And thus, to the maiden, one night spake he,
As he stood in her lonely room,
"By'r Lady, fair maid, I have doubts of thee,
That thy mind hath a secret gloom;
'Twere gruesome dungeon, these mirksome walls,
To imprison such charms as thine,
I trow it were seemly that merrier halls
Should be brighter for thee than mine."

“’Tis said, that Lord Highleigh’s armourer knaves—
May the fiend have his due of all—
Have welded for me strong prisoner-gyves,
And a gibbet for turret wall ;
And Highleigh hath vowed on the relics at Stone
That my body up there shall go,
And dangle and swing, till its every bone
Shall have fallen to dogs below.”

“Now lend me thine ears for a moment, Clare ;
I have plans for our future weal ;
Thou weddest young Rupert, Lord Beeston’s heir,
Who will aid me with bow and steel ;
’Twixt Highleigh and me ’tis an outrance feud,
And ’twere meet that the one were dead ;
And Rupert long time for thy hand hath sued,
And I will it that thou dost wed.”

“Nay, weep not, or thou wilt mine anger stir,
For my mind is grievous sore
That a Saxon churl like yon Highleigh cur
Should lord it o’er forest and moor ;
Once joined with young Rupert in wedlock, then
Shall the caitiff feel Norman power,
For Beeston hath pledged me with all his men
To the sacking of Highleigh’s tower.”

“Next week is the time of St. Martin’s feast,
And my villiens hold revel gay,
And ye shall be joined by a Hulton priest
On the morn of the holy day ;
Till then, is the castle with strength well stored,
And I fear not the Saxon’s hate,
The drawbridge is up and portcullis lowered,
Until Beeston doth reach the gate.”

* * * * *

The portcullis was up and the bridge let fall,
On the eve of St. Martin’s Day ;
The tables were laid in De Layn’s great hall,
And each vassal and guest was gay ;
Sir Leon and Beeston sat side by side,
With the bride and the bridegroom near,
And many a warrior gazed with pride
On a scene to a warrior dear.

With Beeston had journeyed a hundred men,
All seasoned by many a fight
While chasing the Cymry o’er moor and fen,
From the Dee to the Conway bight ;
And helms and cuirasses, dented by blows,
Hung around upon every wall,
While swords, and quivers, broadaxes, and bows,
Lay piled about over the hall.

With fare of the best was each table spread,
And the revel waxed loud and long,
And the rafters shook in their place o'erhead
With applause of the jest and song;
'Twas hidden from all, as the hours flew by,
That the castle was bought and sold—
That they who kept ward on the battlements high
Had been bought with the Saxon's gold.

Till sudden there rose on the air a shout,
Followed sharp by a trumpet peal,
And foemen poured in from the court without,
E'er a Norman could grasp his steel;
And swiftly a harvest of death began;
But the panic was quickly o'er,
And blood of both Norman and Saxon ran
In a red stream over the floor.

Though Norman arms never before had failed,
Yet the Saxon had vantage there,
For Saxon with armour of proof was mailed,
While the breast of his foe was bare;
Still, bravely each stranger from Beeston Hold,
With his comrade of Castle De Layn,
Contested the way of the Saxons bold,
Till he sank on the heaps of slain.

While the fight was young, had Harold sought Clare,
And, bearing her swiftly away,
Had hidden his darling in safety, where
They had trysted on bygone day,
And hurriedly kissing her sweet pale face,
Had prayed her to tarry awhile,
'Till he should return to her hiding-place
And woo her from sorrow to smiles.

Then hastening back to the tower once more,
Had he sought for young Beeston there,
And fought from the basement to upper floor
Loud calling him everywhere,
'Till Rupert's grim father—giant in strife—
Rushed on him with furious breath,
And cleaving his armour, let out his life,
And he fell in the arms of death.

Fierce raged the bloody and murderous fray,
And quarter was pleaded by none,
For Norman from Saxon ne'er turned away,
Though his foemen were three to one—
Each warrior's eyes held the fiendish light
Which had gleamed in the eyes of Cain,
And each brave vassal, and valiant knight,
As he fell was cruelly slain.

'Till Leon De Layn, half maddened with grief,
Cried aloud, with his eyes aflame,
"By'r Lady, no murthering Saxon thief
Shall e'er boast of this night of shame ;"
And fighting his way to the outer porch,
While his face wore a terrible frown,
He loosed the portcullis, and seizing a torch,
In the fuel-room hurled it down.

And the fire-fiend, waked by the warrior's hand,
With a fierce glee entered the fight ;
Transforming each rafter into a brand
Of fearfully glistening light,
And greeting each corpse with a demon kiss,
It sped onward with lurid glare,
And licked up the blood with an angry hiss,
As it mounted each oaken stair :

And chasing the men to the top of the tower—
Setting swiftly the structure ablaze—
It reached them at length, where—their fierce strife o'er—
They crowded with terrified gaze ;
And, sundering the joists of the leaden floor,
As there rose a despairing cry,
The roof went down with a deafening roar,
And carried them down to die.

Aloft, from the dome of the midnight sky,
The pale moon, with radiance cold,
Looked down on the spot, whence that terrible cry
Had gone up from the flaming hold;
On Beeston's far distant castle it shone;
And on Highleigh's battlements hoar;
Where women were watching through night-hours lone,
For the men who would come no more.

It shone on the spot where the maiden Clare
Kept vigil for Harold's return,
And kissed the pale face of the maiden fair,
As she lay 'mid the withered fern—
For pitying angels, hearing her cries,
With the heavenly seal of sleep,
Had sealed up awhile her sorrowing eyes
In the calm of a slumber deep.

And lo! as the pale moon flooded the scene
With its holy and peaceful light—
Flecking the branches with silvery sheen
As they waved in the air of night—
The murmuring breeze, with a sigh of pain
For the folly of human wrong,
Bore over the glen the mysterious strain
Of the murdered minstrel's song.

*"Asleep in earth's bosom the flowerets lie,
Till awakened by April's rain;
The birds which have flown to a summer sky,
Will return in the Spring again;
But loved ones, when severed by death's dark woes,
Are asundered on earth for aye,
To meet where love's fountain eternally flows,
In the land of the Far Away."*

*"Her lover's return my lady-love weeps,
With a lingering, yearning pain;
Alone through the night a vigil she keeps,
But her vigil is all in vain;
Sweet lady, thy lover returns no more
To gladden thy longing sight,
He waits thy coming on happier shore,
Sweet lady good night—good night."*



THE MISER'S DREAM.

(A Christmas Story.)

JOHN Stone was a merchant in London town,
Whose stern face, gaunt and wan,
Instead of a smile, wore ever a frown
Toward his fellow man.

By grasping and hoarding, as seasons rolled,
Of wealth he'd massed a store,
But, like unto others whose God is gold,
He always craved for more.

Once, poor but content, in the years by-gone,
A pleasant home had he,
A wife—who had died—and an only son,
Who came no more from sea.

Now, broken and old, in his mind there rose
No aim but sordid pelf;
He lived, through the seasons, the life of those
Who live alone for self.

By cherishing notions that happiness clings
To nothing else but gold,
He'd turned entirely from happier things,
And grown both hard and cold.

One night, when the last of his clerks had sought
His home and Christmas cheer,
Old John sat alone, in a maze of thought
Of things he held most dear ;

His gold, and his ships that were bearing home
Great increase to his store,
And, mingled with others, bright thoughts would come
Of happier days of yore ;

Of scenes of his childhood, and manhood's prime
Came, now, and then, a gleam,
'Till, lulled by the sound of the Christmas chime,
He slept, and dreamed a dream.

A fairy-like child in a glittering dress,
Perched on his high desk chair—
Around her, in many a shining tress,
Flowed waves of golden hair ;

Her smile was the smile of the bride he'd won
In happy days long past ;
Her features were those of the wayward son
Who on the world he'd cast.

Old John sat gazing with wonder, awhile,
Upon the vision gay ;
Then questioned the child, with a kindly smile—
“Tell me your errand pray?”

“I am,” she replied, “of the fairies queen,
My throne is a golden fane,
In front of the transformation scene
Over at Drury Lane;”

“And there, in the pantomime, each night,
I’ve but to wave my wand,
And shadows depart, and the golden light
Shines forth from fairy land.”

Then drawing the wand from her robes of snow,
The merchant’s office changed ;
And into his heart crept a softening glow,
As round his eyes he ranged.

He sat in a splendidly furnished room
O’erlooking meadows green,
And close by his side, in her childhood’s bloom,
Sat she—the fairy queen ;

And there, apparelled in widowly guise,
Sat, also, the queen's mamma!
The queen looked on him with loving eyes,
And called him "grandpapa!"

The merchant awoke with a sense of fear,
And looked round in surprise;
His office was dismal, and cold, and drear,
And tears came in his eyes.

The lamp-lights, below in the snow-clad street,
Were shining in the gloam,
And under his window, in accents sweet,
The waits sang "home sweet home."

Old John, for awhile, neither moved or spoke,
But sat, with look of pain,[!]
Then hastily donning his hat and cloak,
He started for Drury Lane.

Around him, in numberless Christmas homes,
The windows glowed with light,
While bells proclaimed in their jubilant tones
"'Tis Christmas Eve to-night."

He entered the theatre, sad and lone,
Just at the last grand scene,
And lo! in its midst on a spangled throne,
Sat she—his fairy-queen!

* * * * *

The keeper who guarded the stage side-door—
A man who seldom smiled—
Related the following story o'er
To John, about the child.

“She lives in an alley just close at hand—
She and her mother, alone,
They’ve lately arrived from a foreign land,
And bear the name of Stone.”

“The woman is poor, and to aid her need,
The girl comes here, you see,
The husband—performing some noble deed—
Was drowned far out at sea.”

* * * * *

He dwells in a splendid and happy home,
O'erlooking meadows green,
And close by his side, in her childhood's bloom,
Dwells she—his fairy queen.

And there, apparelled in widowly guise,
Dwells also, the queen's mamma ;
The queen looks on him with loving eyes,
And calls him "grandpapa."



THE GHOST OF HULTON VALE.

GOD save us all from discontent,
And from all evil powers,
And fill our minds with strength and peace,
Through all our future hours.

For all will wish for strength to wait,
Who read this gruesome tale,
Of how a wicked deed was wrought
One time in Hulton Vale.

The moon rose over Wetley Moor,
One Christmas long ago,
And shone upon the peaceful vale
Clad in its robe of snow.

'Twas midnight-tide, and all was still,
Save whispers of the breeze,
And echoes of the Trent's sweet song,
Whilst journeying to the seas.

And there, set in its broad domain
Of meadow-land and wood,
A stately, and a massive pile,
Fair Hulton Abbey stood.

Its casement lights across the snow
A cheery radiance cast—
From turret, and from dining hall,
Where monks did break the fast.

The midnight vesper had been sung,
And—weary vigils o'er—
With wine and bread around the board
Flew gems of wit and lore.

The good old abbot's kindly face
Was fairer still to see,
For he a pleasant secret held,
Which filled his heart with glee.

But yestermorn, from distant York,
Where king held Christmas cheer,
A messenger to him had come
And whispered in his ear.

And all, save one, assembled there,
Reflected back his smiles,
For all, save one, were holy men,
And free from worldly guiles,

Monk Robert joined not in the mirth
Nor laughed he at the jest,
But on his brow reigned gloomy thought,
And in his heart unrest.

Into his lonely austere life
But little sunshine came,
For discontent did mar his thoughts
With dreams of power, and fame.

His mind was like some captive lion
Imprisoned in a cage,
Who—herded with his weaker kind—
Doth chafe with noble rage.

And that he loved not joyous scenes
Each brother knew full well;
And hearts were lighter when he rose
To seek his distant cell.

Monk Robert paced his lonely room,
Till came the witching hour
When unclean spirits walk abroad,
And Satan holdeth power.

And as he strode with restless step—
With anger on his brow,
The fiend, unseen, crept to his side,
And whispered him this vow;

“If Heaven would grant me power and fame,
And rank mid noble peers,
I care not if its gates were barr’d
On me, a thousand years;”

“Nay, more than that, if Satan came
To aid me to my goal,
At death his fiery realm should hold
For evermore, my soul.”

Monk Robert turned, and lo ! there stood
The fiend in human guise ;
His face was fair, but foul deceit
Was lurking in his eyes.

And thus unto the monk spake he,
“If thou wilt pledge thine hand,
Thou shalt be lord of Hulton Vale,
And famous in the land.”

The moonlight through the casement high
With silv'ry radiance streamed,
And lit the spot, where, hand in hand,
Stood holy monk and fiend.

The pale moon hid behind a cloud ;
The winter wind did moan ;
The cock crew forth the hour of dawn ;
Monk Robert was alone.

And as he sat, with whiten'd face ;
And thought his compact o'er,
The good old abbot's portly form
Did stand within the door.

“I give thee joy,” the abbot said,
“I bring thee news of cheer ;
The king hath summoned me to York,
And named thee Abbot here.”

“On yestermorning, from his grace,
The message came to me,
And I have hoarded it till now,
A Christmas gift to thee;”

“This abbey, with its tribute lands,
To thee, in trust, is given,
To hold in fief for Holy See,
Our Lady, and for Heaven;”

“To-day, when ends the noonday mass,
The tidings forth I tell,
And bid to Hulton’s peaceful vale
A long and last farewell;”

“I leave thee now to thankful prayers,
And bid thee seek thy rest,
For soon the Christmas sun begins
His journey to the west.”

* * * * *

On Bagnall hill, within the wood,
A hermit, old and grey,
With nature, and with nature’s God,
Held commune day by day.

He was a man of quiet mind,
Well versed in Holy lore,
Whose placid brow with thought, and age,
Was deeply furrow’d o’er.

Monk Robert was his only friend ;
He loved the monk's pale face,
Well knowing that his inmost heart
Did hold the fount of grace.

The hermit ope'd his door, to hail
The morn of Christmas day,
And looking down the path, beheld
Monk Robert on the way.

His step was slow, his head was bent,
The tears were on his cheek,
And though it was the Christmas morn,
No greeting did he speak ;

But low before the aged seer,
In sorrow did he bow,
And told him of the king's command,
His compact, and his vow.

"Thou art," said he, "a holy saint,
And I, a sinful man,
Who hath beneath the tempter's power,
Sought Heaven's direful ban ;"

"No more the monks of Hulton Vale
Will look upon my face,
A far more worthier than me
Shall rule them in my place ;"

“E’en now I seek a cell like thine,
On some far distant moor,
Where I will weep repentant tears
Until my life is o’er;”

“My weary way is lone and long,
My steps are weak and slow,
I pray thee, of thy charity,
To bless me ere I go.”

“My blessing rest on thee my son,”
The aged hermit said,
“Ere thou hadst vowed such sinful vow,
I would thou hadst been dead;”

“Had this morn been but yestermorn,
Thine were a fearful deed,
And nevermore could blessing serve
To cheer thy heart in need;”

“Thou hast no compact with the fiend,
Though thou didst pledge thine hand,
E’en then, thy name for pious deeds,
Was famed throughout the land;”

“And when he tempted thee, full sore,
To do such foulsome thing,
Thou wert the lord of Hulton Vale
By mandate of the king;”

“’Tis so he comes when discontent
Doth hold our minds in thrall,
And tempteth us to turn from good
And into evil fall ;”

“Look forth towards yon glowing east—
Behold the rising sun,
Lo, how he tireless chaseth night,
Until his race be run ;”

“Before the rites of Holy Church
The fiend of darkness flies ;
Return, my son, to Hulton Vale,
’Tis there thy duty lies ;”

“If thou dost lead a godly life,
From sinful influence free,
At thy last hour the wicked fiend
Shall hold no claim on thee ;”

“But for thine awful vow to Heaven,
When death shall end thy tears,
Thy ghost must wander Hulton Vale
For full a thousand years.”

* * * * *

The moon still rises from the moor
And shines upon the vale,
The Trent still journeys to the seas
Singing its tuneful tale.

But of the abbey's wide domain
No landmark now remains,
And green the grass grows on the spot
Once sacred to its fanes.

And all its holy men, save one,
Bequeathing earth their dust,
Have passed through penitential shades,
To regions of the just.

Year after year, in that far realm,
They hail each Christmas morn,
But poor Monk Robert roams the vale,
Unseen—alone—forlorn.

He wanders o'er the winter snow,
And 'neath the summer skies,
And every wind that murmurs by
Is laden with his sighs.

God save us all from discontent,
And from all evil powers,
And fill our minds with "strength to wait,"
Through all our future hours.



CHRISTMAS ON BOARD THE "MARY ANN."

OUR ship was not "a gallant bark,
With flags and streamers gay ;"
She leaked, and not a fouler tub
Was e'er got under weigh ;
No beauty was she when we sailed,
But ugly as could be,
And soon the stormy winds, and waves,
Made her a sight to see.

Her sails were patched, her masts were bent,
Her yards were "up and down,"
And all her paint, from black and white,
Had turned to rusty brown ;
Unless the wind was dead astern,
For days she'd hardly stir,
But lie and rock, as rocked the bark
Of "Ancient Mariner."

Our tables groaned with dainty fare—
Pea-soup, salt beef and pork ;
The pork was grease, the beef, when boiled,
Would break the strongest fork ;
Whene'er a fresh supply was broached
By Abe, our old black cook,
A fragrant odour floated round,
As from a stagnant brook.

Our captain's looks I can't describe
In tones of honest pride,
If you had met him on the road,
You would have turned aside ;
He wore a danger-signal nose,
And teeth the hue of jet ;
His fav'rite drink was rum, or gin,
Or any he could get.

We'd signed to sail a three years' voyage,
To "trade from port to port,"
And "work when called by night or day"—
And work was never short ;
We got a day on shore sometimes—
To save the pork and peas—
But all our leisure time on board
Was spent in catching fleas.

And, as we roamed from shore to shore,
Each sailor "took his hook ;"
Till all had left the ship but me
And Abel White the cook ;
One ran away at Singapore
And found a native wife ;
Another boss'd a gambling row
And calmed it with his life ;

An opium revel at Hong-Kong,
Took one gay coon away ;
Another died—for country's good—
While chiding a Malay ;
The last one, on a drunken spree,
Went bathing in the dark,
And served to soothe the "inner man"
Of crocodile or shark.

Our captain shipped men in their stead
As each one "passed away,"—
He did not mourn the absent much,
Because of backward pay ;—
First came a nigger, "Snowball Jake,"
And next a Portugee,
And after them, in course of time,
Two "Burms," and one "Chinee."

A motlier crew ne'er pulled a brace,
Or mann'd a capstan bar ;
I'd never met—though second mate—
Their equals, near or far ;
A rowdier lot ne'er crowded aft
At mate's or captain's call—
One man, one cockroach, and a dog,
Could do more work than all.

One day a cyclone, swift and strong,
O'ertook the "Mary Ann,"
And all that night and through next day,
Before its force we ran ;
Our skipper, in his usual form,
Crept down and sought his bunk,
And straightways worked at overtime
In getting blindly drunk.

The wind increased, the lightning glared,
The thunder loudly roared,
We could not see a length ahead,
So thick the rain down-poured,
And, clinging to the shrouds, I thought
Of home, so far away,
For there, I knew, 'twas Christmas Eve,
To-morrow, Christmas Day.

Half buried in the seething waves,
Laboured the "Mary Ann ;"
Her valiant crew crept o'er the deck,
With faces pale and wan ;
The Portugee called on his saints ;
The nigger sang a hymn ;
The Burmese jabbered to their "joss,"
The Chinese joining in.

All through that stormy Christmas Day
We climbed the mountain waves,
Expecting every lurch would fling
Us all to watery graves ;
And, just as night was settling down,
A twinkling light afar
Showed us ahead the dreaded coast
Of dismal Zanzibar.

We tried to wear her, but our men
Got in each other's ways,
And hauling wildly everywhere,
They got the brig "in stays ;"
The mate rushed for'ard with a "spike,"
And down the first he floored—
When, with a loud and heavy crash,
The masts went overboard.

The seas then tumbled on our deck
In tons, like earthquake shocks,
And every passing moment found
Us drifting on the rocks ;
Of all that brave and gallant crew,
Not one was saved but I—
And this is simple, honest truth,
Or else, "it's all my eye."

I ask you merry gentlemen,
Who read these lines to-day—
While wishing you a jolly time,
Good health, and spirits gay,—
How should you like to go to sea,
And be a sailor-man,
And spend your Christmas Day on board
Another "Mary Ann?"



HOMEWARD BOUND.

I.

I'M going home, I'm going home ! What music in those words !
What pleasure to the wanderer their utterance affords,
Causing the beam of memory to shine with wond'rous powers,
And light, with rainbow-tinted rays, the scenes of childhood's hours.

Those happy days, when, with delight, a guileless little child,
He roamed with playmates oft amid the woodland's sylvan wild,
And culled the flowers with eager hands which blossomed on its
ways,
Without a thought of "weal or woe," to come in future days.

Once more, in recollection fond, he runs with joyful glance
To greet, with boisterous shout of glee, his loving sire's advance,
When o'er his rustic cottage home the evening shadows fell,
And sounded through the peaceful vale the distant curfew bell.

The village school once more he sees ; the master, old and gray,
Who pointed out by simple rule, the world's untrodden way ;
The schoolmates, who are scattered now afar o'er land and foam,
Are called back to their places by those words—"I'm going home."

The breezy stretch of upland down ; the church upon the hill,
Beneath whose shade his kindred sleep, away from worldly ill ;
The Sunday morning walk to prayer ; the bells' sweet evening peal ;
The murmuring of the running brook which drove the old mill
wheel.

Another form his memory greets, with wealth of golden hair,
The dearest one on earth to him, the fairest of the fair,
Who promised once, with downcast glance, to share his earthly lot,
And whispered, with a faltering voice, the words—"Forget me not."

Forgotten in such moments are the years of toil and care,
Since first he left his peaceful home, with visions bright and fair,
To seek, in distant countries far across the ocean's foam,
The sweet content which now he's learned is only found at home.

Ah, often when across the sea, beneath an alien sky,
Without a friend, in sickness perhaps, no loving bosom nigh,
The weary heart, with many a sigh, and unavailing moan,
Pines for the tender sympathy of loving ones at home.

II.

"We're homeward bound," "we're homeward bound," the seaman
gaily sings,

While from her bows the gallant ship in clouds the white spray flings,
As on she glides before the breeze, across the ocean foam,
Over the restless rolling waves, on, towards the seaman's home.

The seaman paces o'er the deck, and strains his longing eyes,
To where the far horizon's line, enwrapped in sunset, lies ;
And on his weather-beaten face glad expectation beams,
Of seeing that dear home again he's seen so oft in dreams ;

Of clasping once more to his breast his wife, so fond and true,
His all-expectant little ones, his gray-haired mother too,
Who in his humble cottage dwell, near to the tide-swept shore,
Where the noises of the busy port mingle with ocean's roar ;

Ever creating memories sweet ; throughout the livelong day
Speaking to them, with well-known voice, of him who's far away,
And where on wintry evenings, when angry storm-winds blow,
A prayer goes up aloft for him who left them long ago.

For many years he's sailed along old ocean's trackless ways,
And battled with its tempests oft on dismal stormy days ;
Yet, as the needle, ever true in sunshine or in storms,
His thoughts have pointed ever to those well-remembered forms.

Sweet are his reveries now, so sweet, the seabird's warning cries—
As to'ard its solitary nest before the storm it flies—
Falleth unheeded on his ears, and with the gathering night,
To bar his homeward path, comes forth the storm-king in his might.

"Let go the topsail halyards there !" "Aloft and reef the sails !"
In loud excited accents now the anxious captain hails ;
While from the darkened driving clouds the rain in deluge pours,
And gleams the lightning's lurid glare, and loud the thunder roars.

Wildly the ship bends to the blast, and madly ploughs her path,
On, through the angry hissing surge, lashed by the tempest's wrath ;
And the seaman, clinging to the shrouds, looks o'er the raging sea,
And thinks of Him who stilled the waves on stormy Galilee.

"Light O !" "Light O !" the look-out calls, and every eye
now turns
To where, ahead, with glimmering ray, the harbour lighthouse
burns :

"All hands on deck !" "Steady the helm !" "Steer straight
towards the light !"
And on they dash towards the land, on, through the howling night.

Steadfast and true, the nearing light shines with increasing gleam—
Like the star of hope to a weary soul storm-toss'd on life's dark
stream—

"Ready the anchor for'ard there !" "See that the cable's clear !"
The captain shouts amid the roar which tells the bar is near.

Madly the tempest shrieks with rage, like angry demon wild,
Fearful that from his clutches grim his prey may be despoiled,
Wildly against the plunging bark dash the foam-crested waves,
As the seamen fight for home or death, glad welcomes, or for graves.

Hurrah ! Hurrah ! the bar is crossed, and, like a form with life,
Glides past the gleaming lighthouse the good ship from the strife ;
“ Let go the anchor ! ” “ Pay out chain ! ” and “ Make the cable
fast ! ”

In cheery tones the captain cries, and the seaman's home at last.

III.

“ I'm going home ! ” “ I'm going home ! ” the wounded soldier cries,
And pleasure mantles his wan face, and lights his sunken eyes,
As, swifter than the lightning's flash, his thoughts fly o'er the foam,
And feast upon the bygone scenes within his distant home.

A respite from his pain hath he while murmuring those sweet words,
They strike such thrilling music, vibrating memory's chords,
Calling from out the past again his loving parents' smiles,
Before he dreamed his glory-dream, and sank beneath its wiles.

That glory-dream hath vanished now, for strength is on the wane ;
No more the stirring bugle call will sound for him again,
No more, amid the dashing charge, he'll wave his gleaming brand,
Nor strike, in thickest of the fight, a blow for father-land.

He left his peaceful cottage home, and cast no look behind—
Alas, in all the wide wide world no place like it he'd find—
He heeded not his mother's tears nor fondly clinging arms,
But went away, to seek for fame amid red war's alarms.

Now maimed and suffering, he lies—ah, where is glory now?
Not on that lowly pallet-bed, nor on that pain bent brow?
Alas! the shadow-phantom “Fame,” men seek in battle’s van,
Has added to its victim-throng, a helpless, friendless man;

Friendless? Ah no! there’s yet one spot—the dearest on the
earth!

Where they yet wait to welcome him, who welcomed once his birth,
Where oftentimes at eventide they still kneel side by side,
To offer up a prayer for him, of old their household pride.

* * * * *

Fancy will paint a picture now: a rustic cottage door—
Two old folk sitting side by side, when day is nearly o’er,
Who shade their eyes with trembling hands from sunset’s golden
glow,
And watch a crippled soldier climb the hill with footsteps slow.

Fancy will paint the father’s joy, the mother’s smiles and tears,
As through the garden gate there comes the son they’ve missed
for years—
The loved one’s mournful story told ’mid twilight’s tender gloam—
The sweet “good-night”—the thankful prayer—the soldier’s
welcome home.



IN THE DREAM VALLEY.

THERE is a mystic region, where
Strange forms their vigils keep,
And oftentimes we wander there
In silent hours of sleep ;

And strive with ghouls, or walk with those
Who dwell behind the veil,
And wake from phantom joys or woes
With weird entangled tale.

One time—led by an unseen hand—
I roamed that vale of dreams,
And climbed to where a palace grand
Stood wrapped in sunset gleams.

“Pray tell me, warder brave,” said I
To him who kept the gate,
“Whose princely banner floats on high
Above this vast estate?”

“The envoy of a mighty King,”
Replied the warder grim,
“Holds court within, for them who bring
Their pleas, or dues, to him ;

“To all who sue for guerdons here
Comes justice sure and swift,
And none who hold my lord in fear,
Depart without a gift.”

I passed within the judgment hall,
And to the throne drew near,
And waited hopeful for a call,
That he my prayer might hear.

With features soured by battle frown,
Stood forth a mail-clad knight ;
“I claim,” said he, “a victor’s crown,
Hard earned in many a fight ;”

“My trusty sword hath drank full deep
The crimson fount of life ;
Behind my footsteps women weep
The victims of the strife.”

The judge’s voice in anger, loud
Resounded through the hall,
“Take hence this braggart man of blood,
And cast him from the wall !”

Next came a prelate, proud of mien,
In costly vestments drest,
To plead—and plead full well I ween—
For leisure, and for rest ;

Within the pasture had he toiled
With energy and zest,
But over-zeal had slowly coiled
Around his heart unrest.

The judge replied "E'en now thy sheep
Are wandering far astray,
Thy cunning foeman doth not sleep,
But prowleth night and day."

And next came one in rich array,
Of sleek luxurious mould,
To sue that men should homage pay
To him for gifts of gold ;

By knowledge given, and secret wiles,
He'd hoarded more and more,
And erst, anon, to win men's smiles,
He'd given of his store.

This judgment fell upon his ears ;
"My Master gave thee wealth,
To ease thy brother's mind of fears,
And clothe thine own with health."

A statesman prayed for power and fame ;
A poet for a friend ;
And countless suitors eager came
The suppliant knee to bend.

One, only one, a finished task
Brought to the judge's view,
And humbly bowed to further ask
For further work to do.

And last, a mourner, pale and meek,
Approached the judgment seat,
Who held no plea, but came to seek
Her Lord, to kiss His feet.

The envoy rose and left the hall—
From audience reprieved—
I looked, and lo! the suitors all
Had each some gift received.

A crown of thorns the prelate wore;
The rich man sprigs of rue;
The statesman summer garland bore;
The poet branch of yew;

She of the task was clothed in white,
And on her brow and breast,
Glowing with iridescent light,
There shone a mystic crest;

And she, who, 'mid adversity
Had meek and thankful grown,
Was robed in spotless purity,
And wore a victor's crown.



THE EMIGRANT.

I.

'T WAS not for wealth or fame he strove,—he knew not of
their wiles—

But aimed to win his neighbour's praise, and loved ones' happy
smiles ;

Year after year he worked and sang, contented with his lot,
His little world, a humble farm and lowly turf-wall'd cot.

'Twas there, in happy days of yore, he'd lived his childhood's hours,
And gambolled with his playmates oft amid its fields and flowers :
His parents there had yielded up their warm true hearts to God,
And passed away to sleep in peace beneath the churchyard sod.

Rewarded by the love of those who clustered round his hearth,
In virtue and content he dwelt, (as men should dwell on earth)
Till, unforeseen, by sudden stroke of stern disaster's hand,
There was no more a home for him in all his native land.

Misfortune with unerring aim had thrown its galling chain,
Forged by relentless Fate in links of care, and grief, and pain,
Around his manly Irish heart, which ne'er till then had known,
The painful meaning of the words, "no resting place"—"no home!"

He took his wife and children dear and wandered far away,
From that loved spot, where all his past, and pleasant memories lay,
And often, when upon the ground he laid his weary head,
His aching heart was wrung to hear his children's cry for bread.

Oh, ye, who dwell 'midst plenty by fortune's pleasant stream,
On whom the eyes of those you love with sweet contentment gleam,
Have kindly thoughts, if nothing more, for those who oft-times roam
This cold and cheerless world alone, without a friend or home.

II.

One summer eve, a stately ship sailed off from Dublin Bay,
To seek, across the stormy waves, a haven far away,
And on its crowded deck stood one, with feelings sad, and lone,
Who looked his last on Wicklow's hills, where once had been his
home.

"Farewell, Farewell," that lonely one, in sorrowing accents said,
"My Erin dear good bye for aye, and if upon my head
The snow of age shall ever fall, my heart shall still be thine,
My latest breath a prayer for thee, that peace on thee shall shine;"

"I once was happy 'mid thy hills, by my own cottage hearth,
But Fate's decree has robbed me now of all I prized on earth,
My darling and her little ones, whom I so fondly loved,
By hunger's hand are lowly laid beneath thy flowery sod;"

"Oh, down beneath these rolling waves how peaceful I would rest,
But, that I know there's One above does all things for the best,
To Him I'll humbly pray for strength, His will, not mine, be done,
And hope, that in this race of life my own will soon be run."

He bowed his head upon his hands, and strangers coldly smiled,
To see one weeping in their midst as weeps a little child ;
They knew not of the anguish that wrung that manly heart,
They had not felt the sting of wrong, and recked not of its smart.

III.

Within a frontier "clearing" on a far Canadian "wild,"
Where winds blow free, and nature's forms by man are undefiled,
There dwelt a poor and aged man ; and oft, at close of day,
Would float in cadence through the pines a plaintive Irish lay ;

He dwelt alone, and strangers but seldom crossed his door ;
'Twas peaceful solitude he sought, 'till life for him was o'er,
The furrowed lines upon his brow told of his troubles past,
And pensive melancholy had her mantle round him cast ;

He fought not with a willing hand the human fight for life ;
All blighted were his earthly hopes—his thoughts with anguish rife ;
He longed to join his loved ones in that bright land above,
Where earthly woes are soothed away by tender angel-love ;

Where poverty ne'er comes to blight, and trouble is unknown,
And parted ones are joined for aye before the Father's throne,
Where, ever, and for evermore, by those we love caressed,
The stormy waves of earthly strife subside for e'er to rest.

One morn some strangers entered there and found the old man
dead,
The snow of age had fallen now, for hoary was his head ;
And 'neath the pines they laid him, where deep the shadows wave,
To wait the resurrection morn within his lonely grave.

A CANADIAN WINTER SCENE.

OFTTIMES do I remember one cold day in December,
 'Mid years now passed for ever to the realm of "long ago,"
O'er river, pond, and rill, had the Frost King breathed "be still,"
 And the sun was making jewels on the surface of the snow.

The earth was calmly sleeping—beneath her white robe keeping
 Her treasures till the spring-time 'neath her Maker's watchful
 care ;
And tones of sleigh-bells ringing, their happy burdens bringing
 To skate upon the river, floated through the frosty air.

The winter's sprite attendants had hung transparent pendants
 On gables of the houses, and the fir-trees' spreading arms,
Which, after day's glad dawning had heralded the morning,
 Were glistening in the sunlight with a many pleasing charms.

The sunlight, too, was beaming—with bright refulgence gleaming,
 On the breastplate placed by winter o'er the river's silent breast ;
Which had while night had lingered, in the silver moonbeams
 glittered,
 Like mail-clad warrior taking on the battle eve his rest.

Earth's sons and blooming daughters, o'er the placid frozen waters
 Glided swift, with graceful motion, and with pleasure in their eyes,
And peals of merry laughter, told where they followed after
 Each other down the glaxis, where the swift toboggan flies.

'Twas a scene of mirthful pleasure, and gladness without measure,
 Bright eyes and happy faces met my gaze on every hand—
And brought to mind past meetings, and hopes of future greetings,
 Amid the green-clad valley of my distant native land.

THE NIGHT EXPRESS.

WAKING the tranquil air of night
From out its peacefulness ;
Raising a wave of sound and light,
Speedeth the night express ;
Urging its onward course amain,
Bearing its human freight
Swiftly to scenes, where joy, or pain,
For each, in turn, doth wait.

Voyagers, to ships on far-off shore ;
Friends, distant friends to greet ;
Wanderers, to return no more ;
Lovers, to welcomes sweet ;
Traders, their wares to sell or buy ;
Merchants, on business sped ;
Mourners, to darkened homes, where lie
The dying, or the dead.

Ah, who can pierce the misty veil
Held by the hand of fate ?
E'en now, perhaps, o'er hill and dale,
Disaster dire doth wait ;
Perhaps beside some faulty bridge,
Or where a pointsman sleeps,
On dangerous curve, or giddy ridge,
Death silent vigil keeps.

Watching its course, with fears opprest,
As fast its sounds decrease,
And nature, briefly roused from rest,
Relapses into peace,
We, to the haven of the soul
Humbly this prayer address—
“Swiftly and safely to its goal,
God speed the night express.”

NATURE'S ANTHEM.

BLENDING together in anthem grand,
Singing the sweetest of earthly lays,
Voices of nature o'er sea and land,
Join in the mighty Creator's praise.

Cadence of waters on streams, and seas;
Bleating of lambs and lowing of herds;
Rustle of leaflets; murmurs of breeze;
Humming of insects; music of birds.

On through the ages the hymn will rise,
Daily the tribute of praise be given,
Until the hour, when, beyond the skies,
Angels will sing its amen—in Heaven.

THE BEAUTIFUL LAND.

THERE'S a realm which is hidden from mortal gaze
By Our Father's omnipotent hand ;
And only by treading life's intricate maze
With a trust in His ever inscrutable ways,
Can we look on that beautiful land.

Even thought cannot picture that glorious clime,
With its radiant angel throngs ;
Where, with rapturous joy, for all future time,
We may look on His face with a love sublime,
As we join in their heaven-born songs.

Here, our pleasures are shadowed by pain, and care,
There, is pleasure without alloy ;
Here, we've partings, and sorrows, doubts, and despair,
Which are all unknown in that region so fair,
Where each moment glides blissfully by.

Here, those whom we cherish with fondness on earth,
Taken from us by death's stern hand,
Are regretted with tears to our latest breath ;
But mournings, and painful regrets, and death,
Enter not in the Beautiful Land.

There, all who have left us and "travelled before"—
Those dear ones so loving and true,
Who have passed from our side to return no more—
'Mid the glorious scenes of that "happier shore,"
Are waiting for me and for you.

As our moments on earth are passing away,
They are counting them, one by one,
And, while we are clinging to earth and its clay,
They are silently watching us, day after day,
And longing to welcome us home.

But a few more years, perhaps days, or hours,
And the angel of death will come,
Armed with his welcome or terrible powers,
And lay us to slumber beneath the flowers—
And our journey on earth is done.

On the Lord of our life be our hopes e'er cast,
Let us trust His guiding hand,
And with faith in His love and mercy, so vast,
Let us pray that He'll pilot our steps at last,
To a home in His Beautiful Land.

POESY.

DEEP in the silent mine of thought
Lies *treasure-trove*, concealed,
Which if from honest motive sought,
But waits to be revealed;
And many workers, night and day,
Prompted by unseen hand,
Are searching each untrodden way
Within that treasure land.

To him, who, delving there unseen
For weal of human kind,
Doth find "a gem of ray serene"
Of worth to kindred mind,
The Master sometimes gives the Lyre,
That he may pæan sound,
And show, with chosen words of fire,
To men what he has found.

May sing to soothe his fellows' woes,
And praise Creation's King—
To light a lamp where beauty grows—
The cloak from vice to fling—
To pluck the sting from pain and loss,
And hide misfortune's frown—
To point to Heaven, and show the dross
That decks an earthly crown.

But he who doth his gift deride,
And with it fosters lust,
Or filled with love of gain, or pride,
Doth trail it in the dust,
Is traitor to the poet's creed,
And Him from whom it came,
And acts a wanton, nameless deed
That fouls the poet's name.

THE PHANTOM GUEST.

'T WAS the midnight hour, and my task was o'er,
And I rose to retire to rest,
When silently in through the open door—
Apparelled in garments of days of yore—
There entered a stranger guest.

And with stately mien, with a footstep slow
He moved to a vacant chair;
And I saw by the flickering firelight's glow,
That his locks were white as the winter's snow,
And he wore a look of care.

And I questioned him sadly with trembling fears,
If his errand was joy or woe;
"Dost thou come," said I, "from the by-gone years,
To harrow my heart with sorrowful tears
At thoughts of the 'long ago?'"

"Both sorrow and pleasure my steps attend,"
He replied in tones sublime,
"For the past and the future with me doth blend;
And I come at thy voiceless call, O Friend,
And I bear the name of Time."

"If thou art my friend," murmured I, "O Time,
Our friendship is formed of tears;
My youth is with thee, and my manhood's prime,
And deep in the vaults of thy shadowy clime,
Are dungeoned my happier years;"

“The visions of yore, and the bright resolve
I hoarded but yesterday ;
The dear ones—I trust now at rest above—
Whom I loved of old with an untold love,
Thou hast taken them all away ;”

“And down 'neath the waves of oblivion's sea,
'Mid its waters still and dark—
Once freighted with laughter, and hope, and glee,
Now shattered to pieces, O Time, by thee—
Lies many a human bark.”

“All murmurs are vain for thy vanished hours”—
Said he—“and thy lost ones, child,
I have taken away from all evil powers,
And have laid them to slumber beneath the flowers,
Away from life's tempests wild ;”

“Though I gather the tears in the mourner's eye,
My task is a loving one ;
For 'tis so that I chasten, as years go by,
Each spirit to fit it for life on high,
When its earthly life is done.”

Then he rose, with his kindly eyes aglow
With the light of a loving gleam,
And was passing away with a footstep slow,
When I started to question him more, and lo !
I woke, and 'twas only a dream.

GEORGE HEATH.

The Moorland Poet.

THEY have planted a cross on a church-crowned hill,
That telleth his well-earned praises,
While it showeth the spot, where, peacefully still,
He slumbers beneath the daisies.

And at eve, when the shadows of night are nigh,
The birds gather there for vespers,
And the wandering breezes, lingering, sigh,
And murmur in mournful whispers.

Like a flower, which is blooming at early morn
When brightly the sun is gleaming,
But e'er noon lieth dead in the pitiless storm,
So perished the poet—dreaming.

In his mind, with a swiftly increasing glow,
Was burning that light supernal,
Which guideth the footsteps of man below
To regions of light eternal.

But the marvellous thought, with its meaning deep,
No longer with him doth linger—
At the foot of the cross, in a wakeless sleep,
Low lieth the Moorland singer.

For, bearing a message of peace, and love—
Of love beyond human telling—
A messenger sent by the Master above,
Once entered his humble dwelling;

And he lifted for him that mysterious veil
Which hideth death's silent river—
And he passed from our sight, and his untold tale
Remaineth untold for ever.

SPIRIT VOICES.

SOMETIMES when the day hath died in the west,
And twilight shadows the room,
When the wintry winds are out of their rest,
And sigh in the deepening gloom,
Sweet voices return from the spirit land—
The voices of friends of yore—
And, in fancy, I feel the clasp of a hand,
I'll clasp upon earth no more.

One cometh and taketh a seat at my side,
Who counselled my wayward youth,
And I hear, as of old, the voice of a guide
In whom there was always truth ;
In the battle of life, in his manhood's prime,
He, stricken by death, sank down,
And I know that, afar, in the victor's clime,
He weareth a victor's crown.

And a maiden's sweet voice, singing low and clear,
Is joined with the winds of night,
And the scenes of many a by-gone year
Return to my memory's sight ;
She departed from earth, like the sunlight goes
When clouds come over the sky,
And the sound of her loving voice now flows
In the minstrelsy on high.

A little form standeth once more at my knee,
Two bright little eyes meet mine,
And my name is uttered with boisterous glee,
In tones of a vanished time ;
An angel once entered, unseen, at my door—
His Master had bade him come—
And my darling now dwelleth for evermore,
Afar, in that angel's home.

I now pray, that when Death, with his unseen hand,
Shall lift up for me the veil,
Which hideth from earth that mysterious land
Where all of the lost ones dwell,
I may clasp the kind hand of my boyhood's guide,
And gaze on the loved of yore,
And the voices which gladdened life's morning tide,
May be with me for evermore.

MORE LIGHT.

“LET there be light!” God spake of old,
And darkness fled away:—
These words a solemn meaning hold
For us on earth to-day;
Within our midst stalks Want, and Vice,
And Error, clothed in night,
And o’er the land cries Wisdom’s voice,
“Let there be light!—more light!”

Grim Ignorance, still round us finds
Vast room to flaunt and reign,
And bind in darkness human minds
With its enslaving chain;
It sits enthroned, with surly frown,
And always armed for fight—
But we could easy hurl it down,
If we had light!—more light!

And Vice, like hydra-headed asp,
Still, lurking, creeps and thrives,
And seizeth in its poisonous grasp
Unnumbered human lives;
Its snaky fascinating eyes
Oft fill us with affright,—
It only lives where darkness lies;
Let there be light!—more light!

And Science, stands with soulful eyes
 Beaming with truths unlearned ;
Its open book before us lies,
 With countless leaves unturned ;
We pause and scan it with amaze,
 But cannot read aright,
For Prejudice doth blind our gaze,
 And hides from us its light.

The champions of our numerous creeds
 Argue with wild unrest,
While Satan sows prolific seeds
 Within the sinner's breast ;
The simple faith is all we want
 To guide our steps aright ;
Away with Bigotry and Cant !
 Let there be light !—more light !

Christ's golden words to you and me,
 Breathe love in every tone ;
In heathen countries o'er the sea,
 His words are all unknown ;
To those dark corners of the earth,
 Where minds are needing sight,
Brave soldiers of the cross, go forth,
 And light the gospel light.

“More Light,” an aged dying seer
Murmured in days gone by—
One who had chased the falling tear
From many a mourner’s eye—
From those sweet-meaning words there flows
A balm for earthly care,
And every heart where kindness glows,
Echoes old Goethe’s prayer.

Within this land of ours, to-day,
Are thousands needing bread—
Homeless, and hopeless, sad away,
To stern Misfortune wed,
And many with an iron nerve
Turn coldly from the sight,—
To those who waste while others starve,
Let there be light!—more light!

Oh miser! hoarding up thy gold
While many suffer want,
This world to thee is lone and cold,
Thy joys are few and scant,
Thy life is wrapped in darkness cool
When thou can’st make it bright—
Turn to thy God, thou sordid fool!
And pray for light—more light.

Oh Thou, who once from zone to zone
Bade darkness lift and flee,
We mortals bend before Thy throne,
And humbly pray to Thee ;
Breathe o'er this world of sin and care
Again those words of might,
In answer to old Goethe's prayer,
Let us have light—more light.

THE MIDNIGHT VISION.

IN the silence and gloom of the midnight hours,
When in sleepless unrest we lie,
How the flood-tide of thought, with its wondrous powers,
O'er the sands of the past resistfully pours,
To the scenes of the years gone by.

I was waiting for slumber in vain one night,
With darkness on every hand,
And was thinking of friends who had passed from sight—
Who had taken their ever mysterious flight
To the shores of the unseen land ;

When, in measured cadence, clear, solemn, and slow,
Tolled the hour of the midnight tide ;
And the room was suddenly lighted ; for, lo !
Stood—with face far brighter than evening's glow,
The angel of dreams at my side.

In his hand was a harp with numberless strings,
On his forehead a gleaming crest,
And his face wore a smile, as of he who brings
The glad message of joy from afar, which flings
A sweet calm to the anxious breast.

And he beckoned, and lo ! with a stately tread,
Came the form of a minstrel old,
Who approached the dream angel with bended head ;
And the angel gave him the harp, and said,
“Of thy mission, a part unfold.”

As the minstrel struck forth a musical rhyme
Which related a tale of strife,
The angel of dreams spake in accents sublime,
And I knew that the name of the harper was Time,
And his harp was a human life.

In a weird and wild measure rose the refrain,
And it soon to a sad dirge grew,
Then it suddenly burst to a wail of pain,
And the strings of the harp, with the overstrain,
One by one, all asunder flew.

Then the angel replied to my look of pain
In a tone of unspeakable love,
“All the strings of the harps Time breaketh in twain,
Will be joined by the Master’s hand again,
To be broken no more—above.”

NIGHTFALL.

HOW sweet at the hour of nightfall to wander
 Away from the town, when our duties are done,
And, standing alone on the hill side, to ponder
 With thoughts of delight on days that are gone ;

And list to the voices of merry birds, flinging
 A flood of glad music over the vale,
That blends with the sound of the rivulet, singing
 In monotones sweet, its often-told tale ;

And silently watch where the conquering shadows
 Westward are chasing the life-giver Light ;
While, out from the east, o'er the river and meadows,
 Creepeth the footsteps of rest-giving Night.

The lowing of herds, and the tinkle of sheep-bells,
 Break fitfully out on the air—and die ;
And stars peep aloft, like the bright eyes of angels
 Keeping their vigil o'er earth in the sky.

Save the song which the rivulet singeth for ever,
 The sounds of creation grow fainter—and cease ;
And clouds, by the rising moon fringed with silver,
 Float over the vale like banners of peace.

THE SILENT RIVER.

THERE'S a land which, alas, is shadowed with woe,
And a land where smiles e'er beam,
And between their confines, with a ceaseless flow—
Over which, with a pale face, myriads go—
There glideth a silent stream.

And across that ever mysterious stream,
A ferryman, clothed in white,
E'er plyeth his craft, from the day's first gleam,
Through the hours of the morning, and noon, and e'en,
And the tranquil gloom of night.

Of that river, unknown to sunshine or storm,
Men speak with a subdued breath;
For its banks are approached through many a thorn,
And its ferryman white is an angel form,
Who beareth the name of Death.

By the side of its waters at early morn,
An innocent infant sleeps,
And, away by its angel ferryman borne,
Maketh joy in one land, while a mother, forlorn,
In the other pines and weeps.

And there cometh a youth at the heat of day
Where floweth its silent tide,
Who, as backward his lingering glances stray,
Enters into the bark, and taketh his way
Across to the other side.

And an aged form comes at the eventide,
Who beckons with feeble hand,
And he taketh his seat by the boatman's side,
And they welcome each other, and gently glide
Away to the peaceful land.

One by one, shall we all, in a little while,
Take hold of that boatman's hand;
May we enter his bark with a happy smile,
And depart from this world, which sorrows defile,
To dwell in the happier land.

ODE TO DEATH.

O Death ! we mortals breathe thy name
With thoughts e'er near akin to pain,
And trembling fears ;
And yet thy silent unseen blow
Doth end our every care and woe,
And all our tears.

Before thy footsteps griefs depart ;
The prisoner, with his aching heart,
Thou makest free ;
The sufferer leaves his aches and pains,
The weary slave lays down his chains,
And goes with thee.

The youth, whose gaze is fixed before,
To pierce the bright mists, hanging o'er
The future years,
Thou call'st away before his views
Are marred, to see their rainbow hues
Dissolve in tears.

The "bowed with age," upon whose face
Stern sorrow furrowed lines doth trace
As with a brand,
Grown weary with earth's myriad guiles,
Doth hail thee oft with welcome smiles,
And clasps thine hand.

Oh ! silent messenger of love !
That bearest succour from above
To weary souls,
Who yearning always to be free,
E'er turn from life with hope to thee,
As life unrolls.

Tis thine, O Death, the unseen hand
Which ope's the portal of that land—
The Realm of Peace !
And human life's brief transient reign,
Is but a journeying of pain,
That soon will cease.

ODE TO THE PAST.

WITHIN thy silent realm, O Past,
In shadowy vaults thou holdest fast
The bygone years ;
With all their vanished scenes, and joys,
Their brilliant hopes, and sufferers' cries,
And mourners' tears :

The fame of millions who have died
For country's weal, on land and tide,
In every clime ;
And thousands, who, for conscience sake,
Dared bloody sword and burning stake,
In olden time :

The songs of troubadours, so dear
To Norman maid and warrior's ear,
At banquet gay ;
The herald shouts, the trumpet calls,
Which sounded 'neath old castle walls,
In bygone day.

The numberless abandoned schemes,
And mystical prophetic themes,
Of seers of yore ;—
All these, in turn, to thee have fled,
And by thy dungeon doors are hid
For evermore.

Thou hast unnumbered noble deeds
Of men, who've met their fellows' needs
 With ready hand;
And fearless words, and poet rhymes,
Which have rang out in stormy times
 For father-land.

Thou hast the happier days of those
Who turn from life, and wait its close
 With longings deep;
The loving smiles of those of ours,
We've laid to slumber 'neath the flowers,
 In quiet sleep.

Thy hand grasps quickly as they fly,
Each happy hour, each fleeting joy,
 And sweet good-bye;
And every fond regret of ours,
Or yearning wish for vanished hours,
 Thou dost defy.

But still, O grim and silent Past,
A strong and active foe thou hast,
 Who conquers thee—
For Memory o'er thy region soars,
And bursts, at will, thy dungeon doors,
 And lays them free.

ABSENT FRIENDS.

BY many home firesides to-day,
There stands a vacant chair,
And tender wishes soar away
To loved ones elsewhere :
Some far in distant regions dwell ;
Some brave the stormy main ;
And some have breathed their last farewell,
And come no more again.

May He who marks each sparrow's fall,
To mourners comfort bring,
And keep the absent, one and all,
Beneath His sheltering wing.

Where kindred share the toil of life,
True sympathy is known,
But hard the lot of daily strife
To those who strive alone ;
New friendships, formed as years go by,
Are not like those of yore—
Too oft, like summer flowers, they die
When summer time is o'er.

May He who marks each sparrow's fall,
And every comfort brings,
Cast o'er the absent, one and all,
The shadow of His wings.

To every one within our homes—
Alas, we know full well—
From out the future always looms
The day which brings “farewell ;”
But if to fortunes foul, or fair,
Each loved one’s pathway wends,
Is only known to Him, whose care
From every ill defends.

May He, who marks each sparrow’s fall,
And every comfort brings,
Cast o’er the absent, and us all,
The shadow of His wings.

FAITH.

WHEN our hearts tire, hoping in vain,
Some fond desire striving to gain
Faith whispers to us, calming unrest,
Dei Voluntas, God knoweth best.

THERE IS NO DEATH.

THE soul to God—the rest to clay,
For other birth and breath ;
So life goes on from day to day,
There’s no such thing as “death.”

PASSING AWAY.

WE are yielding them up to relentless fate—
The hopes of our youth—ever gay;
Yet we trust to the future, and still cry “wait,”
And think not of time ’till its often too late,
As those hopes are passing away.

We are yielding them one by one to death—
Our friends—and we hopefully pray
To rejoin them again; yet, knowing the path,
We linger ’mid pleasure, as swiftly our breath
Is, hour by hour, passing away.

We are yielding up life as our moments fly
To eternity day by day;
Heedless those moments too often flit by,
And only ’mid sorrow we think, with a sigh,
That they’re fruitlessly passing away.

Oh let not our hearts with a vague unrest
Sigh for hopes that were all too gay;
Nor for friends who are peacefully taking their rest—
Who feel not the longings which harrow the breast,
As its hopes are passing away.

Let us rather be patient, and live so that time
Will find us through each future day,
Looking trustfully forward with feelings sublime,
To a home in that beautiful “happier clime,”
Where there’s never no “passing away.”

BEYOND.

LIKE to a gust of wind, which, unseen, enters
In through an open door,
Quenching the taper's gleam, and leaving darkness
Where all was light before ;
So doth the white Death Angel glide in silence
Into a dear one's room,
And from two loving eyes the light departeth,
Leaving our hearts in gloom.

Like as the sun at eve,—his course pursuing—
With radiant tinted gleams
Kisseth the fading clouds farewell, and goeth
To brighten other scenes,
So doth the Angel Reaper kiss our loved ones—
And fading eyes, so fond,
Beam with a tender light, and gently closing,
Open again—beyond.

Soon, like the wind-blown light, our light will flicker,
And suddenly expire ;
Soon, like the sun at eve—our duties ended—
We shall in turn retire ;
Soon, will the Angel Reaper come in silence,
And loose each earthly bond.—
Then, may we meet our lost one's smiling faces,
Waiting for us—beyond.

MUSINGS.

WHAT is Doubt? Our Father turning
His face from us awhile,
That we, a wholesome lesson learning,
May treasure more His smile.

What is Hope? A ray of sunlight
Brightening days of care;
The gleaming weapon—ever bright—
With which we kill despair.

What is Love? A spring of water
Amid life's desert dearth;
A foretaste of the bliss hereafter,
Given us while on earth.

What is Life? A fleeting pleasure
Mixed with doubts and fears,
Joys, and sorrows, without measure,
Bright hopes, regrets and tears.

What is Death? What we call "dying,"
Is but the pent-up soul
Bursting its earthly bonds, and flying
To its eternal goal.

THE STORM KING.

THE monarch is he of the rolling sea,
And none deny his right ;
The turbulent waters, so wild and free—
The winds that whistle in wanton glee,
Proclaim his power and might.

His chariot is driven by ocean steeds
Across the bounding waves ;
He sleeps—and the tempest awhile recedes,
And peace smiles over the watery meads ;
He wakes—and again it raves.

And often, unknown to the seaman's gaze,
He sights his ship so fair,
As proudly she glides o'er the trackless ways—
From shore to shore of the ocean maze,
With burden rich and rare.

And swiftly his lightning shafts are cast—
Loudly his thunders din ;
And while the gay vessel is sinking fast,
And terrified mortals outshriek the blast,
He gathers his harvest in.

Ah, many and fair are the forms he keeps
Safe-garnered 'neath the main ;
The old and the young together he reaps—
The mother, the babe, in his stronghold sleeps,
And wake no more again.

In vain do the lights of the harbour burn,
To guide them to the shore,
All vainly for them do their kindred yearn—
And loving welcomes await their return,
For they return no more.

BABY SLEEPS.

TWO little eyes sealed in slumber;
A little heart silent—at rest;
Another one joined to the number
Of those in the realm of the blest.

Two little lips that ne'er uttered
A word to cause anger, or pain;
A spirit of light, which hath fluttered
Away to its bright home again.

A little form peacefully moulded
By Death, in mysterious calm;
A lamb, which the Shepherd hath folded,
Away from all danger of harm.

A little frail delicate flower,
Withered away from our gaze;
An emblem of God's mighty power,
And ever inscrutable ways.

WILL NEVER DIE.

(After Charles Dickens.)

THE knowledge of "Our Father's" love,
Instilled 'mid childhood's hours,
With many a kindly word, by those
Who sleep beneath the flowers,
Doth soothe in troubled after years,
The weary spirit's sighs,
And beacon-lights the soul through life,
And never, never dies.

The earnest pleas for heavenly help
In moments of despair;
The prayer when dark temptation comes,
With promises so fair;
The cheering words which foster hope
When hope is on the wane;
The soft replies to anger's taunts;
Are never breathed in vain.

The kindly grasp of friendship's hand
When scandal holdeth power;
The loving smile of sympathy
In sorrow's lingering hour;
The act of charity, which soothes
The needy sufferer's sigh,
Though hidden in some grateful breast,
Will never, never die.

The sharp retort which bares the fault
In weaker brother's mind ;
The unkind act, or look of scorn,
That leaves its sting behind ;
Within the wounded heart ofttimes
Will, unforgotten, lie,
And by recording angels kept,
Will never, never die.

The well-timed seeds of earnest thought,
Though humble be their source,
If scattered to the world, will fall,
And bear their fruits in course—
The good that in some human minds
Ofttimes, all hidden, lies,
Is sometimes wakened by a word,
And never, never dies.

Then let us e'er with judgment use
Our words, and actions too,
Our actions all be works of love,
Our words be kind, and true—
So will content, and holy peace,
Be with us, ever nigh,
As conscience sweetly whispers us,
These things will never die.

WAITING.

SHELTERED from the storms of winter,
Through the cold dark hours,
Safe in mother earth's still bosom,
Sleep the summer flowers,
Waiting till the March wind, calling
Forth the April rain,
Wakes them one by one from slumber,
To gladden earth again.

Deep in every human bosom,
All forgotten, lie
Tender memories,—holy teachings
Of the years gone by—
Waiting till some sad affliction,
Or some word unkind,
Calleth them, with mournful pathos,
Back again to mind.

Sailing on through storm or sunshine—
Through each day and night,
Mariners upon the ocean,
Strain their longing sight,
Keeping watch, and anxious waiting,
Striving heart and hand,
Till upon the far horizon
Gleams the wished-for land.

Toiling onward o'er life's pathways,
Pilgrims here below ;
Sometimes cloud, and sometimes sunshine,
Oftimes frost and snow ;
Only waiting, hopeful waiting,
Till our tasks are done,
And the Master bids us slumber,
And the goal is won.

THE TRIAL OF FAITH.

GOD spake to Abraham of old,
"I gave a son to thee,
But now, behold, thy faith is cold,
Give back thy son to me ;
Go forth across yon distant wild,
A place I'll show to thee,
Where thou must offer up the child,
A sacrifice to be."

And Abraham prayed in silent grief
Against the stern behest,
But to his prayer came no relief,
To calm his soul's unrest,
And with his son—his only son—
He sadly took his way,
O'er Mor'ah's waste he journeyed on,
Day after weary day.

On Mor'ah's mountain, stern and wild,
One morn the sunlight beamed—
On altar, and on struggling child,
On upraised knife it gleamed,
When lo ! an angel from on high
Arrests the flashing blade,
And Abraham's grief is turned to joy,
And Abraham's peace is made.

If God should bend us to the dust
To prove our faith, or love,
Oh may our faith, like Abraham's trust,
E'er strong and steadfast prove,
And may our love, though tested sore
Beneath his chastening rod,
For ever, and for evermore,
Be true to Abraham's God.

OUR FATHER.

“OUR Father,” who with tireless fond affection,
Doth help us, when—all other helpers flown—
We strive alone with sorrowful affliction,
Our hearts with vain endeavours weary grown ;
And who, with patient care and loving kindness,
Doth guide our footsteps with an unseen hand,
As, struggling on in doubt and worldly blindness,
We seek our home in Heaven—Thy happier land.

“All hallowed be Thy name” through every nation !

The sun, the planets, which through ages roll,
Like drops of water in the mighty ocean,

Are but as atoms in creation whole ;
And at the voice of Thy supernal wisdom,
Creation’s circling solar systems came,
A limitless, sublimely awful kingdom !

Father Almighty !—“Hallowed be Thy name.”

“Thy will be done.” How strange we mortals murmur

With ceaseless cry, as this life’s cares increase,
Yet speak of death with thoughts akin to terror,
When death but ope’s to us Thy realm of peace ;
Thy hand but chastens us when stubborn-hearted,

To cause the healing spring of faith to run,
So that subdued with thoughts of hopes departed,
We may with reverence say, “Thy will be done.”

“Thy kingdom come.” Life’s moments swiftly flying,

Bring naught but hopes which perish day by day ;
Like autumn leaflets, when night-winds are sighing,
Fall in the dark unseen and pass away ;

But soon—Thou knowest when—on some to-morrow
Will gleam before us, brighter than the sun,

Thy kingdom ! where there is no care or sorrow—
Father, in Thy good time, “Thy kingdom come.”

UNDER THE SHADOW OF THY WINGS.

I wandered from Thy path in life's bright morning,
And oft, alas, in noonday's sunny hours,
My vain heart ever friendly voices scorning
When distant weeds did bear the hues of flowers ;
Now, 'tis the evening, and my strength is waning,
My eyes are growing dark to earthly things,
And I am toiling onward, hope sustaining,
Striving to keep the shelter of Thy wings.

Tempters flock round me as the sky doth darken,
Proffering ease and guidance to their guests,
Many their jibes because I will not hearken—
Holding the path whereon Thy shadow rests ;
If, in my blindness, I should seek to borrow
Help from a source which cometh not of Thee,
Purge me by pain, and chasten me with sorrow,
So shall I know Thou carest still for me.

Oh let Thy shadow guide my footsteps ever ;
Defend and aid me till I win the goal ;
Aid me to cross the dark mysterious river ;
Help me to reach the haven of my soul ;
If I should faint upon the way, or falter,
Still may Thy shadow hold me in embrace,
And when—the journey o'er—I leave its shelter,
Let me look upward and behold—Thy face !

STRETCH FORTH THY HAND.

STRETCH forth Thy hand to help me, Oh my Father,
The way grows dark and I have far to go,
Across the windward sky the storm-clouds gather,
And I am weary and my steps are slow;
The foeman cometh, and I've grown faint-hearted,
I have no hiding-place where I may flee,
My helpers, one by one, have all departed,
I have no helper now, my God, but Thee.

Stretch forth Thy hand! My once gay bark is lying
All wrecked and shattered far away from land,
And I to reach the shore am vainly trying,
The wild waves beat me back on every hand;
My cries are lost amid the tempest-thunder,
My eyes are blinded with the lightning glare,
Make haste to help me, or I perish under
The gloomy waters of this dark despair.

Stretch forth Thy hand to hold this cup of sorrow,
Its depth of bitterness to Thee is known,
I shuddering turn from it, and cry, "to-morrow,"
And each to-morrow finds me weaker grown;
I cannot drink if Thou withhold Thy succour,
My hand is nerveless and my strength is gone,
I try in vain—too weak is each endeavour—
And I must daily mourn the task undone.

THE GOLDEN CITY.

A City, bright with golden halls,
Stands hidden from our sight;
With ruby gates, and diamond walls,
And minarets of light :

Oh, city, bright with golden halls,
Our hopes are fixed on thee ;
Thy ruby gates and diamond walls,
We long, we long to see.

Its shining streets and happy homes,
Are filled with angel guests,
And on its crystal towers and domes,
Eternal sunshine rests :

Oh, city, bright with happy homes,
Our hopes are fixed on thee ;
Thy shining streets and crystal domes,
We long, we long to see.

THE LESSON OF THE DAISIES.

IS thy heart by some dark sorrow
Overburdened with unrest ?
And the dawn of each to-morrow
Brings no solace to thy breast ?

For thy trouble there is reason ;
Thine is but the common lot ;
Without sorrow's wholesome lesson,
Wholesome truths would be forgot.

See, amid the fields, the daisies,
How throughout the summer days
Sweet pure face each one upraises—
Looking up to Heaven always.

Oftentimes—no rain descending—
These sweet flowerets droop with dearth,
And, with weariness, low bending,
Turn their faces to the earth ;

Till the shower, with sudden violence,
Bendeth them to earth still lower—
Purer afterwards ; in silence
They look upward, as before.

Oft some common human sorrow,
O'er our minds its shadow flings,
And we daily seek to borrow
False relief from worldly things ;

Then, God sends us deeper sadness,
That our hearts, with anguish riven,
Purified from guile, with gladness
May look up from earth, to Heaven.

LAY NOT UP TREASURES ON EARTH.

HEED not the search for earthly wealth. It brings
No solace to the mourner's aching heart,
It shieldeth not from pain, or anger's stings,
Nor doth it to the sufferer health impart ;
A mine of untold wealth, exhaustless, lies
Beneath the surface of each human mind,
And priceless gems, and balm for weary sighs,
Are hidden there for those who "seek to find."

Vain is the toil for earthly fame. Its powers
For but a brief uncertain time will stay,
And oft our choicest blessings—Love's sweet flowers,
Before its wild ambitions fade away ;
E'er from the past the bright examples shine
Of men, who lived not for themselves alone,
Who sought not fame, but aimed for praise divine,
And now, in fame's high temple have a throne.

Place not thy trust in earthly friends. Their eyes
Will oftentimes turn from thee in sorrow's hours ;
Before the breath of scorn, or erring scandal's lies,
They'll wither from thy path like summer flowers ;
Thou hast a Friend who loves thee day by day,
Who, with His hand outstretched, e'er bids thee come—
Tread not alone life's dark and dangerous way,
Trust to His guidance, and He'll lead thee home.

HOPE ON.

HOPE on brave heart! each fleeting day
Will mitigate thy pain,
Thy grief, in time, will pass away,
And joy return again;
Be patient but a little while,
And boldly breast the storm,
Which might have clouded fortune's smile
In darker, drearier form.

Hope on, hope on! for every woe
In time doth surely cease:
And "flowerets blossom after snow;"
And "after storm comes peace;"
Hope on! for hope doth conquer fears,
And murmurs all are vain,
And "smiles are brighter after tears,"
Like "sunshine after rain."

Pain, disappointment, care and strife,
Will come to every one;
Yet each, with wholesome lessons rife,
E'er points to guide us on;
In loving-kindness from above,
On all alike they fall;
"Our Father chasteneth in love"—
He loveth one and all.

DEI VOLUNTATE.

A Bird, on weary pinion
Once sought its distant nest ;
A ship, across the ocean
Once sailed towards the west ;
The bird, shot by a fowler,
Fell in its homeward flight ;
The ship, 'mid cries of terror,
Sank 'neath the waves one night.

A sculptor carved a figure
To win a lasting name ;
A painter limned a picture,
And dreamed of future fame ;
The figure of the sculptor
Unfinished stands to-day ;
The picture of the painter
Has passed from sight away.

A poet's years of labour
Came to an end one hour ;
A preacher once, with fervour,
Spake words of wond'rous power ;
The poets' work hath vanished,
As vanisheth a sound ;
The preacher's words have perished,
Like "seed on stony ground."

Well sang an olden singer,
'Mid disappointment's pain,
"If God help not the toiler,
His toil is all in vain;"
And well said Shakespeare, lending
His voice to swell the lay,
"Providence shapes our ending,
Rough-hew it how we may."

AN ADVENT SONG.

SOON will the Christmas bells o'er hill and dale,
And over distant dells, ring their glad tale,
Tuneful and musical sounding once more,
Telling the beautiful story of yore.

How a great Stranger came once to earth,
Laid in a manger—humble his birth;
How a great Conqueror yielded His breath,
Taking the terror for ever from death.

Stands a bright city fair on a far shore,
Over its angels there, reigns evermore
He, who for all of us suffered, and died—
Happy the life must be there by His side.

WORK, AND WAIT.

LABOUR is parent to rest and pleasure ;
The drones who cumber our busy hive,
Taste not the sweets of well-earned leisure,
Awarded to those who daily strive ;
To all toil-sowers who sow in earnest,
Trusting to Him who controlleth fate,
Will come, in due time, the day of harvest—
The crown of labour is “strength to wait.”

Strength, each duty and task to follow,
Though they are burdened with care or pain ;
Strength to be patient 'neath clouds of sorrow,
And wait till the sunshine returns again ;
This life is a morass weary and dangerous—
Our homes lie far on its other side,
But kindred have travelled the way before us,
Leaving their footprints our steps to guide.

If we, with a strong and firm endeavour,
Manfully “labour and wait” each day,
Though we win fame or fortune never,
But silently pass to our rest away,
Our memory will live in friendly story,
Cherished like strains of an olden rhyme,
Lingering, and fading in tender glory,
As fade the leaves in the autumn time.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

“**T**HE city’s doomed ! Fly, sentry—fly !”
The people cried, and fled the gate ;
“ My post is here,” he made reply—
And bravely met a soldier’s fate !
His name, inscribed with words of pride,
No ancient roll or record hath,
We only know a soldier died.
Faithful unto death.

Their lives laid down for others’ sake—
Good shepherds of their Master’s fold—
By bloody sword and burning stake,
The holy martyrs died of old ;
They stemmed the tide of tyranny—
They dared the angry bigot’s wrath,
And fell for truth and liberty,
Faithful unto death.

Be, Lord, our guide, and lead us on,
Our pilgrim footsteps daily keep,
’Till life’s last sunset gleam has gone,
And time hath come for us to sleep ;
Vouchsafe us strength, that we may be,
Until we yield our latest breath,
To honour, duty, truth and Thee,
Faithful unto death.

THE SHIELD OF FAITH.

HOW bravely spake of old the Spartan mother,
Her breast with anguish rife;
Steeling herself maternal grief to smother,
Arming her son for strife.

“Bear swift thy sword where Sparta’s soldiers gather,
And take this stalwart shield,
On which his comrades bore thy valiant father
From his last battle field;

“E’er face thy country’s foes with anger burning,
And when the fight is o’er,
And Sparta’s sons, with martial pomp returning,
Seek victor’s homes once more;”

“Within those ranks, world-famed for deeds of valour,
Thy homeward pathway tread,
Bearing thy shield unstained by foul dishonour
Or borne upon it—dead.”

To all, who in life’s warfare, bravely battle
To win a home in heaven,
As safeguard from the poisoned shafts of evil
The Shield of Faith is given.

And if amid the strife we, craven, falter
When foes oppress the soul,
And fly our shield to seek an easier shelter,
We may not reach the goal.

But if we, boldly striving, still press onward,
With faces to the foe,
Our shield our refuge, and our efforts upward,
We shall in safety go.

And when at last we stand before that portal
Which is by death unsealed,
Angels will welcome us to bliss immortal,
If we bear home our shield.

REMEMBER, AND FORGIVE.

OF the wounds we receive in the war of life,
Some have but fleeting pain,
But, alas, there are others we get in the strife
That hurtful long remain ;
And, forgetting the blows we ourselves have dealt
On others 'mid the fray,
A desire for revenge is oftentimes felt,
Which ripens day by day.

It may be a loved one, in anger's unrest,
Has uttered thoughtless words,
Which we foolishly harbour within our breast,
Vibrating angry chords ;
And with gloomy resolves are our motives stir'd
To pay in kind some day—
We do not remember how often we've err'd,
In just the selfsame way.

Or a man, whom we deem an ungrateful friend,
Ignores a byegone deed ;
Or another, on whom we could e'er depend,
Withholds his aid in need ;
And our mind is o'ercast with an angry thought
Whene'er we breathe his name,
Forgetting how oft our help has been sought
By needy friends, in vain.

In the strife there are many, well-armed and strong,
Who leave a gory trail,
Who will beat to the earth for the slightest wrong
A brother weak and frail—
Let all such remember the weapons they wield
Will fail their hand one day,
And the cries which arise from the battle-field
Are echoed far away.

“Ou Father forgive us our trespasses
As others we forgive,”
Is a prayer, which of old was bequeathed to us,
To prompt us how to live ;
Let us always look back on Calvary's scene
When seeking to avenge,
And remember the words of The Nazarene
When harbouring revenge.

Let us always remember that gentle words
Will soothe the angry heart,
And that bitter retorts are like two-edged swords,
Which oft deep wounds impart,
Or we may, when we're old, look back on the past
And grieve for chances flown,
For the kind of a harvest we reap at last,
Depends on what we've sown.

In life's battle we've numberless snares to shun—
Dangers unseen are near,
And the bravest of all, e'er the victory's won,
Must oftentimes pause in fear,
But with Love and Forgiveness for guide and shield,
Our warfare will be light,
And when duty is done, we may leave the field
As victors from the fight.

UNFORTUNATES.

HAVE you no thoughts for these poor sisters, Oh my brothers,
Save those of cold contempt or proud disdain?
Have you no charity but that indifference smothers?
No other future aim but worldly gain?

Is there not one brave man, amid the number
Of those among you blessed with wealth and might,
Will rouse his fellows from their slothful slumber,
To aid these waifs in their unequal fight?

Will you pursue your selfish pleasures, rather
Than stretch your hand these fallen ones to raise?
Is not the "well done" of your Heavenly Father
Better by far than this world's highest praise?

Oh servants of the Cross, whom the Creator
Hath filled with messages of peace and love,
See you the harvest that your foeman waits for?
Gather! and reap it for your Lord above!

Oh valiant Christian soldiers, rouse and arm you!
Wake up and let your banner be unfurled!
The mighty Lord of Hosts will lead and aid you,
Till from its eminence this Evil's hurled.

And you my gentle sisters, who are dwellers
Mid earth's abundance in contented homes!
Gain you the memories of bright endeavours,
To cheer you when the white death angel comes.

And you, my brothers, who are steadfast working
To stem this tide of evil, day by day,
Still let your noble efforts be unceasing—
You are the pioneers who ope' the way.

In time your labours will become the lighter,
As others join your ranks with pen, or deed;
"The fight's not always to the strongest fighter,
The race not always to the swiftest steed."

POOR CHILDREN.

THERE are little pale forms with imploring eyes,
And garments tattered and torn,
Who are under the arch of our beautiful skies,
To misfortune and misery born.

They are calling to us, these helpless ones,
With a pleading, though silent voice,
From numberless wretched homes,
Sad abodes of neglect and vice.

They are calling to us through each wintry hour,
And they must not appeal in vain :
They who toil for the weal of the suff'ring poor,
Have a promise of fourfold again.

"If thou love me," said One, with sorrowful eyes,
"Feed the lambs of my human fold:"
Oh brothers, around us with pitiful cries
They suffer with hunger and cold.

Let us pause in our race for honour or wealth,
With a thought for these little ones' need,
E'er Indifference doth sap from our minds their health
And consigns us as slaves to Greed.

Let us pause, while pursuing with eager breath
Our phantoms of various name,
And remember our record of premature death,
Is a record of sin, and shame.

THE CHILD AND THE STARS.

DEAR mother, what are yon glittering lights—
Those silent twinkling stars ?

Are they lamps that burn through the darkened nights,
To beacon those souls on their homeward flights
Which burst their earthly bars ?

The soul on its heavenward path, my boy,
Needs none such guiding light ;
Secure in the care of its Maker's eye,
The Spirit, earth free'd, to its home on high
Wingeth unseen its flight.

Are they lights in the windows of heaven above ?
Placed by the angels there,
That our wondering glances may upward move,
And that we, as we think of their watchful love,
May breathe a thankful prayer ?

We need not those glorious orbs, my child,
To tell of heavenly care ;
The lowliest flower in the woodland wild,
From every heart that is undefiled,
Calls forth a thankful prayer.

Are they fires?—as I've read in a tale of old—
Each one a flaming ball
That for thousands and thousands of years have rolled,
And by which, in the past, the seers foretold
Each empire's wane, or fall ?

The mystical arts of the past, my boy,
To oblivion's grasp are hurled;
Man, wiser, now lifteth his gaze on high,
Believing each light in yon midnight sky—
Each gleaming star, a world.

Are they worlds like this beautiful world of ours?
And peopled like it? oh say,
Have they valleys with meadows bedeck'd with flowers,
And rivers, and woodlands with sylvan bowers,
Where wild birds sing all day?

I know not, my child, for those far-off lands
No mortal eye hath seen,
But, formed by the selfsame Creator's hands,
Their valleys unseen and their unknown strands
Are fair as ours, I ween;

And like to our own, with the wondrous things
That o'er its surface lie,
Each one of those star-worlds silently sings
The praise of that bountiful King of kings
Whose throne is fixed on high.

May'st thou, through the future, my gentle boy,
When wandering afar,
E'er serve that great King as thy years go by,
And have for thy goal His bright home on high,
Beyond the furthest star.

WAYSIDE SONGS.

“OH life's but a journey of pleasure”—
Is the burden of childhood's song—
“Its pathways are bordered with flowers,
Which we cull as we wander along;
'Tis true, that the flowerets we gather
Soon languish, and wither, and die,
But why should we mourn that they perish,
When others are blossoming nigh.”

“This life is a journeying dreary”—
Is the burden of manhood's lay—
“The flowerets which gladdened our childhood,
From our footsteps have vanished away;
With burdens we're struggling onward,
And our feet are weary and sore,
'Twere well if our journey were ended
In the bliss of the land before.”

“Our wanderings are well nigh over”
Is the song that the aged sing,
As the light of life's waning sunset
A sweet halo doth round them fling—
“And soon will a messenger holy
To our weariness bring surcease,
And will open for us the portal
Of the Realm of Eternal Peace.”

FURTHER ON.

EARTH'S a scene of busy warfare—
Life and death at strife ;
And thy post's allotted somewhere
In the ranks of life ;
If perchance thou'rt weary, soldier,
E'er thy victory's won !
Bear up bravely ! it is better
Further on.

If thou art a valiant fighter,
Striving in the van,
Chasing sin, and doubt, and error,
From thy fellow man ;
Faithful soldier fight on boldly !
Soon thy part is done,
And the victor's crown awaits thee
Further on.

Earth's our Master's vineyard-garden,
Where we, each and all,
Through the day must bear a burden,
'Till night's shadows fall ;
And as each hard burden's carried,
Or each task is done,
So we shall be all rewarded
Further on.

Labourers in this earthly vineyard !
Sowers of the seed ;
Ye who train the young plants upward ;
Ye who pluck the weed ;
Hard your task, but be ye faithful !
Soon will evening come,
And there's home and rest, so peaceful,
Further on.

Life is but a day's short journey
Towards a promised land ;
And upon its pathway, many
Hidden pitfalls stand,
Snares to shun whose names are legion,
E'er the goal is won,
And we reach the "fairer region"
Further on.

Pilgrim linger not, though weary—
Though thy feet are sore,
When thy path is rough and dreary,
Smoother 'tis before,
Loiter not upon the wayside,
Soon the day is gone,
And there's rest for thee at night-tide
Further on.

SLUMBERHAVENLAND.

THE village spire down in the vale
Points always to the sky,
And tells, with silent voice, a tale
Of those who round it lie,
Who, mid the waves of care and sin
No longer vigils keep,
Whose barks are anchored safe, within
Its haven-land of sleep.

The wild birds gather there at eve
To chant their vesper hymn;
The breezes linger there, to breathe
A tender requiem;
Their drowsy song amid the flowers,
The bees drone through the day;
And softly glide the passing hours,
Till time shall pass away.

O'er life's wide sea, to Fortune's realm,
We gaily launch our bark,
But oft it answers not our helm,
And everything grows dark;
Gay phantom shapes we chase—and fail,
Till weary heart and hand,
We turn the prow and set the sail
For Slumberhavenland.

And when, at last, the shades of night
Around us darkly loom,
And we, with failing strength and sight,
Steer watchful through the gloom,
From out the dark there comes a call—
The Pilot clasps our hand!
Our voyage is o'er! our anchors fall
In Slumberhavenland.

ANNIE.

THY dark eyes bright with fever's light,
And filled with love for me,
I watched through tears one dismal night,
The last on earth for thee.

One chill October morning, o'er
The hills dawned cold and pale,
And thou wert hid, for evermore,
The other side the veil.

I never knew 'till thou had'st died,
How when sweet Hope departs,
It leaves behind an aching void
Within all human hearts;

Nor felt how hard it is, when bid
To humbly kiss the rod,
Until upon thy coffin lid
I heard the falling clod.

I bear life's burden on 'till eve,
With yearnings forward cast,
But thou the toilsome path didst leave
Before the noon was past.

The Master saw thy task was done,
And summoned thee to rest ;
What earthly hopes with thee have gone,
He only knoweth best.

There's many a ship of stately form,
Laden with wealth, hard won,
Goes down in darkness 'mid the storm,
Unseen by all, save One ;

And many a fabric Hope uprears,
And Foresight trenches round,
Which crumbles through the gathering years,
In silence, to the ground.

Freighted with dreams, to fancy's realm
I gaily launched a bark ;
The Pilot stood not at the helm—
It perished in the dark.

I reared a superstructure grand,
With hopes of selfish birth ;
It fell beneath the Master's hand
In ruins to the earth.

Thy gentle voice and loving smile,
In mercy kind, was given
To cheer my worldly heart awhile,
And speak to it of heaven ;

But now, I hear that voice of yore
Only in memory gleams ;
And thy sweet presence comes no more,
Except in fitful dreams.

No more at peaceful eventide
Thy welcome greets me now ;
Thy vacant chair is by my side,
But where, oh where art thou ?

I know that in thy far off home
There are no sighs nor tears,
Nor any of the cares, which come
On earth with after years ;

But when I ask where thou hast flown,
And where thy home can be,
I seek a knowledge only known
To Him, who sent for thee.

All wordly creeds, each human thought,
But human impress wears ;
No matter how conviction's bought,
The stain of doubt it bears.

Could I but hold the simple faith,
That heaven is everywhere—
That lost ones watch our earthly path,
Our actions, foul or fair ;

A childlike trust, a lofty creed,
With powerful mission rife,
To keep men pure in word and deed,
Amid this toil and strife ;

Then could I feel thee by my side
Through every passing hour,
To keep me back from sin and pride,
With firm restraining power ;

A guardian spirit, as of yore,
In loving mercy, given
To bind my heart for evermore
To virtue, truth, and heaven.



AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE.

WHEN the last of the light of departing day
Hath faded away in the west,
And the little ones wearied with boisterous play
Have all gone away to their rest,
Then there cometh to me, with a yearning deep,
On the wings of a latent pain,
The thought of my darling, who's gone to sleep,
And who'll waken no more again.

And I fancy I hear, as in days gone by,
The strains of his favourite song,
And I cannot help weeping, although I try,
For I know my regrets are wrong ;
My darling now speaketh and singeth, I know,
In the sweetest of unknown tongues,
For he knoweth the language of angels now,
And he singeth the angels' songs.

Nevermore shall I stand at the eventide
To wait his return at the door ;
Nevermore will my little one come to my side,
As he came in the days of yore ;
For, in raiment of white doth he evermore wait,
With an outstretched beckoning hand,
To welcome me in through the beautiful gate—
The gate of the Beautiful Land.

LITTLE WILLIE.

ON a bye-gone night, in a darkened room,
Our darling in suffering lay,
With his pale face stamped with the seal of death ;
And we watched through tears his fluttering breath,
As he peacefully passed away.

We are lonely now, and oftentimes sigh
As we think of the bright hours flown,
And a silent grave where the daisies grow—
Where our darling lies, whom we cherished so,
Away from our care—alone.

And we sit sometimes at the twilight hour,
And think him again by our side,
And our hearts fill up with a nameless pain,
As we breathe a prayer and listen, in vain,
For the voice of our Willie, who died.

And we say to each other with tearful eyes,
"Twas his will," and, "His will be done ;"
For we know, that, 'tis better through earthly life
To battle alone with sorrow and strife,
So that Willie's battle is won.

At our window we stand oftentimes at eve,
And we gaze on the crimson west,
And picture bright scenes 'mid its shadows sublime,
Of the beautiful vales of that glorious clime,
Where our darling is safely at rest.

A MEMORY.

DOWN in a valley of peaceful meadows,
Near to the foot of a green-clad hill,
Deep in the shade of its oak and willows,
Stood the old ivy-grown water mill.

And the vespers of birds, when the night was nigh,
Would oft blend with the bells' sweet peal;
And the rivulet danced, as it wandered by,
To the song of the old mill wheel.

Bright was the gleam of the sparkling water,
Leaping with glee down the steep mill race;
Brighter the eyes of the miller's fair daughter—
Brighter the rose tints over her face.

And the vespers of birds, when the night was nigh,
Would oft blend with the bells' sweet peal;
And the rivulet danced, as it wandered by,
To the song of the old mill wheel.

Happy the days 'mid the summer weather,
When, by the side of the flowing stream,
Wander'd we oft, heart-tethered together—
Link'd in the bliss of a sweet love dream.

And the vespers of birds, when the night was nigh,
Would oft blend with the bells' sweet peal;
And the rivulet danced, as it wandered by,
To the song of the old mill wheel.

Now, do I roam by the mill-stream, sad-hearted,
Sank, has the mill, in the lap of decay,
Tenantless now, its charms have departed,
Flown like a shadow for ever away ;

Still the vespers of birds, when the night is nigh,
Often blend with the bells' sweet peal ;
But no longer the rivulet dances by
To the song of the old mill wheel.

Lonely and sadly the yew-trees, keeping
Watch on the hill through the lone night-tide,
Shadow the spot where the miller is sleeping,
And Maggie, my darling, sleeps there at his side ;

And the vespers of birds, when the night is nigh,
Often blend with the bells' sweet peal ;
But no longer the rivulet dances by
To the song of the old mill wheel.

Fond was the love of the miller's daughter ;
Lingers it sweetly in memory still,
Linked with the music of falling water,
Joined to the sound of the busy mill ;

With the vespers of birds, when the night is nigh,
And the bells' sweet evening peal ;
The sound of the rivulet murmuring by ;
And the song of the old mill wheel.

IN REPLY TO A LETTER.

THE song is very sweet to me,
And calleth forth a sigh,
That I may never point to thee
The way thy goal doth lie ;
I would my pen had power to show
The knowledge thou dost ask,
The Master and thyself but know
If Poesy's thy task.

All they who sing the songs of earth
Must heed not wealth or fame,
And ever hold of little worth
The worldling's praise or blame ;
Must meekly bear, like Him, their Cross,
While mockers jibe, and sting ;
Must weep for others' pain and loss,
And while they weep must sing.

The chatt'ring jay doth flaunt with pride
Its colours to the day—
The mavis sings at eventide,
As sunset fades away ;
The nightingale, in woodlands lone
Doth hide itself from view—
The sweetest song, of purest tone,
Is only for the few.

THE LOST JEWEL.

A beautiful jewel was given one day,
By the Lord of a far off land,
Enclosed in a wond'rous casket of clay,
He had fashioned with His own hand.

We cherished it ever with fond delight—
'Twas the fairest we ever had seen—
From it e'er sparkled, with radiance bright,
The pure light of a ray serene.

Our darling was fair as the morning sun
When he shines on the pure white snow;
Now all that is left of our little one
Is a mound where the daisies grow—

A little green mound where the daisies grow
When the spring sun giveth his light;
A little white mound where the winter snow
Falls silently through the dark night.

For angels were visiting earth one day,
And they entered our darling's room,
And kissed her sweet face, and took her away
To their far off glorious home.

We'd lost our beautiful jewel of price;
And, blinded with sorrowful pain,
We said to each other with mournful voice,
"We shall find not our jewel again."

We remembered not that affection's chain,
Which on earth is suddenly riven,
Will be joined by "Our Father's" hand again,
To be broken no more—in heaven.

But after our time of mourning was o'er,
We were able to say with smiles,
"Our darling is folded for evermore!
And is safe from all worldly guiles."

In fancy we see her in bright array,
Whene'er we look up to the sky,
For we know that our jewel is shining to-day
In the Land of the jewels, on high.

ACROSTIC.

JOY o'ertaketh the steps at last
Of sufferings bravely borne;
Heaven renews when cares are past,
No matter how we're worn.

Homeward the eagle swiftly wings
Its flight, when storm clouds lour,
Lo! how to shield its young, it springs
To fold them safely o'er,—
Oh, may God keep thee 'neath His wings
Now, and for evermore.

IN MEMORY OF.

HE who our councils led
Lay in unrest ;
There, as the darkness fled,
Entered a guest ;
Entered on silent wings,
Envoy of love
From the Great King of kings
Reigning above.

Gleaming with golden light
From the great Throne ;
Hidden from mortal sight,
Came he alone ;
Kissed our friend's face so wan,
Calming his breast,
Beckoned the good old man
Home to his rest.

Oft as we think of him
Grief will have birth ;
Oft shall we speak of him—
Knowing his worth—
Telling the good he wrought
All his long day—
Telling the fight he fought
Bravely alway.

GEORGE HOWSON.

(In Memory).

A man, whose mind attuned to right and beauty,
Was quick to break the snare and pluck the weed,
And who, by wise advice, and acts of duty,
Scattered around his footsteps fruitful seed,

Humble in affluence, kind, and slow to anger,
Helpful to strivers in their worldly strife,
He paved the way for many a sweet-voiced singer,
And taught to all the harmony of life.

His counsel will be missed through each to-morrow,
By those who grateful recollection keep ;
And bright-hued wefts of memory warped with sorrow,
Will shroud the old man in his final sleep.

And yet, though we oftentimes to one another
Shall speak his honoured name with words of praise,
'Tis meet that we our vain regrets should smother—
'Twere wrong a murmuring for our loss to raise ;

His way was long toward the great forever ;
Life's sunset shadows kissed his pilgrim feet ;
Lo, now his burden lies this side the river,
And he has crossed to welcomes fond and sweet.

The ripen'd grain was waiting for the reaper ;
The Master knows when harvest-time is best ;
Tired hands are folded o'er a peaceful sleeper ;
The soul is garnered in eternal rest.

TO A FRIEND.

ACROSS the angry, stormy sea,
On pinion swift and strong,
The sea-bird wingeth, wild and free,
Throughout the whole day long:

May He who guides the sea-bird's flight,
E'er guide thy way through life,
And arm thy mind with fearless might
To conquer in the strife.

Across the placid woodland mere,
When evening sun is low—
Seeking their home as night draws near—
In peace the wild-fowl go:

Like as the wild-fowl peaceful fly
Homeward at eventide,
So may'st thou glide, when death is nigh,
Home to thy Master's side.

TO NELLIE.

TWO pilgrims are we from morn 'till night,
With footsteps sundered wide,
The one in the morning's rosy light,
The other at eventide.

If God should will you the length of day,
And me but brief time more,
I pray that He pilot our steps alway,
Until our journey's o'er;

Under His shadow us twain to keep
Until the day is past;
Under His shadow in quiet sleep;
To wake, and meet at last.

A SEASIDE REVERIE.

WHEN the sea is all bright with the sunset gleams,
In my heart oft creepeth a pain,
As the tide of my memory backward streams
To the past, and a form, which only in dreams
Will revisit my side again.

And I watch the wild waves roll over the strand
Through a mist of gathering tears;
And I hear not their singing in monotonous grand,
For my thoughts are away in a far off land,
Where I dwelt in the bygone years.

And I roam once again 'neath the palm trees' shade,
With Lulo, so loving and kind;
And I hear, as of old, the whisperings made
By the leaves, as the branches above us are swayed
By the breath of the tropical wind.

Or I sit at the hour when daylight flees,
By her side at the cottage door—
While the mocking-bird's song floats out on the breeze,
And the fireflies dance in the shade of the trees—
As I sat in the days of yore.

And with look of delight, do I gaze again
In the depths of her love-lit eyes;
And she speaketh to me in a low sweet strain,
Which hath soothing power, like the soft refrain
Of an anthem when it dies.

I shall hear her sweet accents on earth no more;
Nevermore shall I clasp her hand;
For the angels were reaping on earth one hour,
And they looked on my darling, and gathered a flower
For the Lord of their own bright land.

BY THE STREAM.

IN the light of the sunset's departing gleam,
At the close of a day gone by,
On the emerald banks of a flowing stream,
Sat Maggie, and Ettie, and I.

No fairer than Ettie there ever was seen,
With her wealth of pale golden hair;
While Maggie was dark as an Eastern queen,
And she carried a look of care.

And we fashioned three vessels with twigs and leaves
From the boughs of a willow tree,
And we launched them away on the rippling waves,
As an emblem for each to be.

Gentle Ettie's was filled with a dream of love
That should never know care or pain,
And it circled away like old Noah's dove,
And returned to her hand again.

I freighted my bark with a vision of fame
As the hero of some great fight,
But a wind-driven wavelet suddenly came,
And it sank from my longing sight.

"As for mine, it shall bear for me hopes alone
Of a life on a far off shore;"
Said Maggie—and straight to a moss-grown stone
Did it glide, and its voyage was o'er.

Now alone by the side of the flowing stream
Do I wander oft-times, and sigh,
As I think of the past, and each glory dream
That we dreamed in the days gone by.

In the Beautiful Land doth our Maggie wait
For us all, through the future years;
And poor Ettie hath sank to a loveless fate,
And her way is a way of tears.

SAILOR WILLIE.

I cannot sing my songs to-night,
My thoughts are elsewhere,
I miss a face with smile so bright,
I see a vacant chair ;
My Willie, far across the sea,
Sailed off the other day,
And home is not the same to me,
Now Willie's gone away.

May angels guard my sailor brave,
Wherever he may be ;
And guide him o'er the stormy wave,
In safety, home to me.

To-day I wandered by the mere,
And lingered near the spot,
Where Willie whispered in my ear
The words, "Forget me not ;"
A lark was singing, overhead,
A love song to his mate,—
I wonder if the prayer I said
Has passed the golden gate.

May angels guard my sailor brave, etc.

I know that brighter eyes than mine
Will meet his winning smile ;
I know that warmer sunbeams shine
Where Willie goes awhile ;
But still I know he holds me dear,
And though he's o'er the foam,
His fondest thoughts are centred here,
With those he loves, at home.

May angels guard my sailor brave, etc.

I LOVE THEE.

THY form before my memory gleams
Wherever I may be ;
My daily thoughts, and nightly dreams,
Are thoughts and dreams of thee.

I hear thy voice in every wind
That breathes o'er land and sea ;
Each changing scene, but brings to mind
Some fonder thought of thee.

If Heaven should grant me wealth, or fame,
How sweet 'twould be to me,
To share that wealth, or noble name,
My own dear love, with thee.

HAND IN HAND.

L INKED in bonds of happy love,
Joined in holy tether,
Pilgrims to the Land above,
Started we together :

Hand in hand, through weal or woe,
Sweetheart, may we onward go.

Toiling upward, towards the light,
Sharing joy and sorrow,
Sometimes in the sunshine bright,
Sometimes in the shadow :

Sweetheart, may we onward go,
Hand in hand, through weal or woe.

May Our Father, in His Love,
Keep us close together,
Here below, and There above,
Hand in hand, for ever :

Hand in hand, through weal or woe,
Sweetheart, may we always go.

BY THE SIDE OF THE DERWENT RIVER.

BY the side of the Derwent river,
Where the waters swiftly flow,
It was there I woo'd a maiden,
In the days of long ago,

She was fair as a summer flower ;
And as bright as the winter snow ;
And she dwelt by the Derwent river,
Where the daisies and violets grow.

By the side of the Derwent river,
Where the waters dance and glide,
It was there I won my darling—
My winsome and lovely bride.

She was fair as a summer flower ;
And as bright as the winter snow ;
And we dwelt by the Derwent river,
Where the daisies and violets grow.

By the side of the Derwent river,
Where the yew-trees vigil keep,
It is there I've laid my darling,
In her lonely grave to sleep.

She was fair as a summer flower ;
And as bright as the winter snow ;
And she sleeps by the Derwent river,
Where the daisies and violets grow.

THE ANTHEM.

A FAR upon the rolling seas,
The good ships come and go,
Fan'd by the gentle tropic breeze,
Or chased by storm and snow;
And as the wind, across the sea,
Wafts the great ships along,
It joins with sea-birds wild and free,
In one grand ocean song;
Emanuel! Emanuel!
Lord of the land and sea;
Emanuel! Emanuel!
Glory and praise to Thee.

We stand and watch the sunset-glow,
And picture bright scenes there,
Where cloudland rivers silent flow
Through cloudland valleys fair;
And as the darkness folds the day,
Nature's sweet voices rise,
And borne by breezes far away,
Go upward to the skies;
Emanuel! Emanuel!
Lord of the land and sea;
Emanuel! Emanuel!
Glory and praise to Thee.

Across a mystic unseen tide,
There is a region fair,
Where all our loved and lost abide,
Away from pain and care,
Where, day by day, in happy throngs,
Before the Throne of Light,
In sweetest of the unknown tongues,
They sing both day and night;
Emanuel! Emanuel!
Lord of the land and sea;
Emanuel! Emanuel!
Glory and praise to Thee.

THE TWO SINGERS.

THE happy lark, at evenglow
Uprises from the ground,
And pours upon the earth below
A gem cascade of sound;
The faithful poet, soars above
The aims of worldly strife,
And sings a song of hope and love
To brighten human life.



WAITING BY THE SHORE.

O H bird! had I strong wings as thine,
No longer here I'd waiting stand,
But fly to where, across the brine,
My lover seeks his native land.

Over the sea—over the sea,
Spread out thy wings, birdie for me;
Bird of the free! Bear thou for me,
Word to my lover, over the sea.

My love like thee, is bold and free;
Like thee, the angry storm he braves;
And soon his happy bride I'll be,
And ride with him the rolling waves.

Over the sea, etc.

Tell him, sweet bird, my eyes are dim
With weary watching by the shore;
And that I breathe a prayer for him,
When storms arise and thunders roar.

Over the sea, etc.

Tell him, how, morning, noon, and night,
My loving heart for him doth yearn;
And how I strain my longing sight,
To hail with joy his glad return.

Over the sea, etc.

OUR POLLY.

BRIGHT as the morning sunshine,
Shining on virgin snow;
Sweeter than flowers at spring-time,
Out where the breezes blow;

Eyes of blue, golden hair,
Always blythe and jolly,
Full of fun, free from care,
That's our darling Polly!

She is our household treasure,
Dearer than all the gold,
Great is our daily pleasure,
Watching her charms unfold:

Eyes of blue, etc., etc.

Fair is the water lily,
Blooming at tranquil e'en,
Fairer by far is Polly,
Blooming at sweet sixteen.

Eyes of blue, etc., etc.

CHRISTMAS BELLS.

FROM the old cathedrals, quaint and hoar,
From each village church in distant dells,
And from towers in every town and city,
Gaily sound the merry Christmas bells.

Joyous voices with a tinge of sadness,
Echoing through the valleys east and west,
Telling forth again their tale of gladness,
Ever welcome to the Christian breast.

Children's eyes to-day with glee will glisten,
At the clang and pealing of the bells—
While fond parent hearts with joy will listen,
Breathing prayers as their glad music swells.

Old folk, too, will sit in quiet, thinking
Tender thoughts of days long ago,
As the winds of winter, softly sighing,
Bear the bells' sweet cadence to and fro.

With the strains of mirth at Christmas party,
Blythely mingles the glad song of bells;
And, 'mid pause in many a fireside story,
Joyous tale their merry music tells.

Ring out, loud and clear, O bells, your message!
Send your tones afar o'er hill and dale!
Welcome is your sound to hall or cottage;
Dear to every heart your oft-told tale.

ANOTHER CHRISTMAS STORY.

THERE are tender pleading voices, if we listen we may hear
them,
We may hear the Christmas story which the voice of Pity tells ;
It struck a chord of sadness in our holy Christmas anthem,
And a note of melancholy in the music of its bells.

We enrich our homes with garlands, and with many harmless
follies,
We each vie with one another to make glad the festive time,
While, amid our towns and cities, within squalid courts and
alleys,
There are children cold and hungry in the winter frost and rime.

There are scores of little sufferers in want and sickness lying,
As we joyful meet together in many a happy throng.
And the silent voice of conscience to each thoughtful heart is
crying,
“Do you hear the hungry children?” “Will you help to right
their wrong?”

These voices bear no anger, but, in pleading mournful measure,
They remind us of our duty in a clear upbraiding strain—
Do you hear them, Oh my brothers, 'mid your search for wealth,
or pleasure?
And to you my gentle sisters, do they always plead in vain?

There are many tireless workers who with earnestness are asking,
Who are claiming our assistance to alleviate these ills ;
There are many kindly natures that Procrastination's masking,
Whilst its ever busy master their “good intention” kills.

“Peace and goodwill to all mankind,” so sang the Christmas
singers ;
“Goodwill and peace,” o’er all the land, was the merry bells’
refrain—
There is no peace in those sad homes where gaunt-eyed Hunger
lingers,
And no goodwill within the heart where Indifference doth reign.

TO THE DEPARTING YEAR.

WE decked thee at thy birth, O year, with ivy and with holly,
While naked trees and hedges gleamed with Nature’s frozen
tears,
Shed as thy predecessor passed—sere, pale, and melancholy—
Away, with silent footsteps, to the realm of bygone years.

We welcomed thee with gladness, for our changeful hearts—e’er
longing
For the realizing of bright hopes and fondly cherished dreams—
Filled high with expectation, with the hopeful thoughts were
thronging,
Which light the misty future with bright rainbow-tinted gleams.

And Nature, that for long had worn a look of patient sadness,
Smiled sweetly as the loud March wind called forth the April
showers ;
And sunny Spring, with silent hand, filled up our hearts with
gladness,
By hanging leaflets on the trees, and strewing fields with flowers.

Then the Summer came, and once again the birds were gaily
singing
Amid the green-clad meadows, as each sunny day went by ;
And Earth was clothed in beauty, as to every tree was clinging
The bounteous gifts of Nature ’neath the blue and golden sky.

But as Summer passed away, and Autumn—mildly beaming—
Unhung the Spring's green bannerets, and folded up the flowers,
The light of retrospection, o'er our spirits sadly gleaming,
Showed us, still unfulfilled, the hopes which graced thy natal
hours.

Now, as beneath the weeping skies of cold and dark December,
Thou'rt dying slowly, day by day, O old "departing year,"
'Tis not alone for thee we mourn, and oft, as we remember
Thy many happy days gone by, steals in our eyes the tear ;

'Tis not for thee, O dying year, we sorrow, and sad-hearted,
In quiet thoughtful moments heave oftentimes a secret sigh,
But for the many cherished hopes, and loving friends, departed
For ever from our life-path, as thy months flew swiftly by.

We, too, like thee "Departing Year," have each had our Novembers,
As one by one false friendships waned, and loved ones passed
away,
We, too, O year like thee, have had our Junes, and our Decembers,
Our showers of tears like April, and our sunny hours like May.

Loud, through the solemn leafless trees, the cold night wind is
wailing
For thee, with mournful voice, a weird funereal knell ;
While we, with many fond regrets, and sighs, all unavailing,
Bid thee, with saddened hearts, O year, for evermore,—farewell.

THE MIDNIGHT BELLS.

IN the old village church in the dell,
Have the "watchers" now gathered to pray,
And the ringers are tolling the bell
For the year that is passing away.

Save the sighs of the murmuring breeze,
As it beareth the sound of the bell
Through the snow-covered boughs of the trees,
The valley is peacefully still.

Soon the dirge of the bell will have ceased,
With its sad and monotonous tone,
And the year—like a spirit released—
To the past will for ever have flown.

In a cadence clear, solemn, and slow,
Strikes the old year's funereal knells,—
And, with jubilant voice, o'er the snow,
Bursts the peal, the glad peal, of the bells.

And afar o'er the moon lighted vale,
Do they ring out melodious and clear,
Glad-repeating their often told tale
Of the birth of another New Year ;

And the echoes awake in the fells,
And they catch up the joyous refrain
Of the song, the sweet song of the bells,
And re-sing it again and again.

Telling sweetly of sorrows gone by,
And of duties all finished, and done,
And of rest, and unspeakable joy,
When the battle is o'er and won.

ANOTHER YEAR.

THE year is gone ! Its scenes of joy or sadness
Have vanished from us to return no more,
Leaving their memories of grief or gladness
To join our memories of days of yore.

Another year hath from our life departed ;
And some, alas, will mourn it many a day
When thinking of the dear ones, loving-hearted,
Who 'mid its days grew pale and passed away.

Another of the fetters burst asunder,
Which in its dungeon binds the pent-up soul,
Longing, with weary all-expectant wonder,
To fly from earth to its mysterious goal.

Another stage in life's rough journey over ;
Another milestone passed by pilgrim feet,
Travelling towards that unseen silent river,
Upon whose other side all pilgrims meet.

“Another year,” says youth, and thoughtless tarries
Amid the snares by wanton pleasures cast ;
“Another year,” experience says, and hurries
On through the shadows, ere the day is past.

“Another year,” quoths dark Procrastination,
To those who good intentions slothful keep ;
“Another year,” soft whispers false temptation,
Aiming to soothe its victim’s fears asleep.

Oh, may the Great Defender guide and guard us,
Be near us when our many tempters come,
So that another year, in passing by, may find us
Nearer to Him and heaven—nearer home.

THE NEW YEAR.

ANOTHER year has passed for ever from us,
Into the shadow-land of years gone by ;
And now, like task unwritten placed before us
By the great Master, doth the new year lie.

May we with diligence and circumspection,
Walk through the coming year our several ways,
Pruning our minds with constant self-correction,
So that each task, fulfilled, will merit praise.

Year after year, to guide our steps from error,
Experience reads us lessons loud and long;
How happiness is won by loving one another;
And retribution follows after wrong;

How oft the scornful word or unkind action,
Back to its source with interest returns—
While kindness fosters friendship, and affection,
And enmity with anger oft sojourns:

With virtue dwelleth ever sweet contentment;
Wealth and frugality go hand in hand;
And prudence is a foe to disappointment;
And error flies from truth like wind-blown sand.

These guiding lessons, are, in ceaseless measure,
Repeated to us as our moments fly;
By following them, will peace, content and pleasure,
Be ever with us as the years go by.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE YEAR.

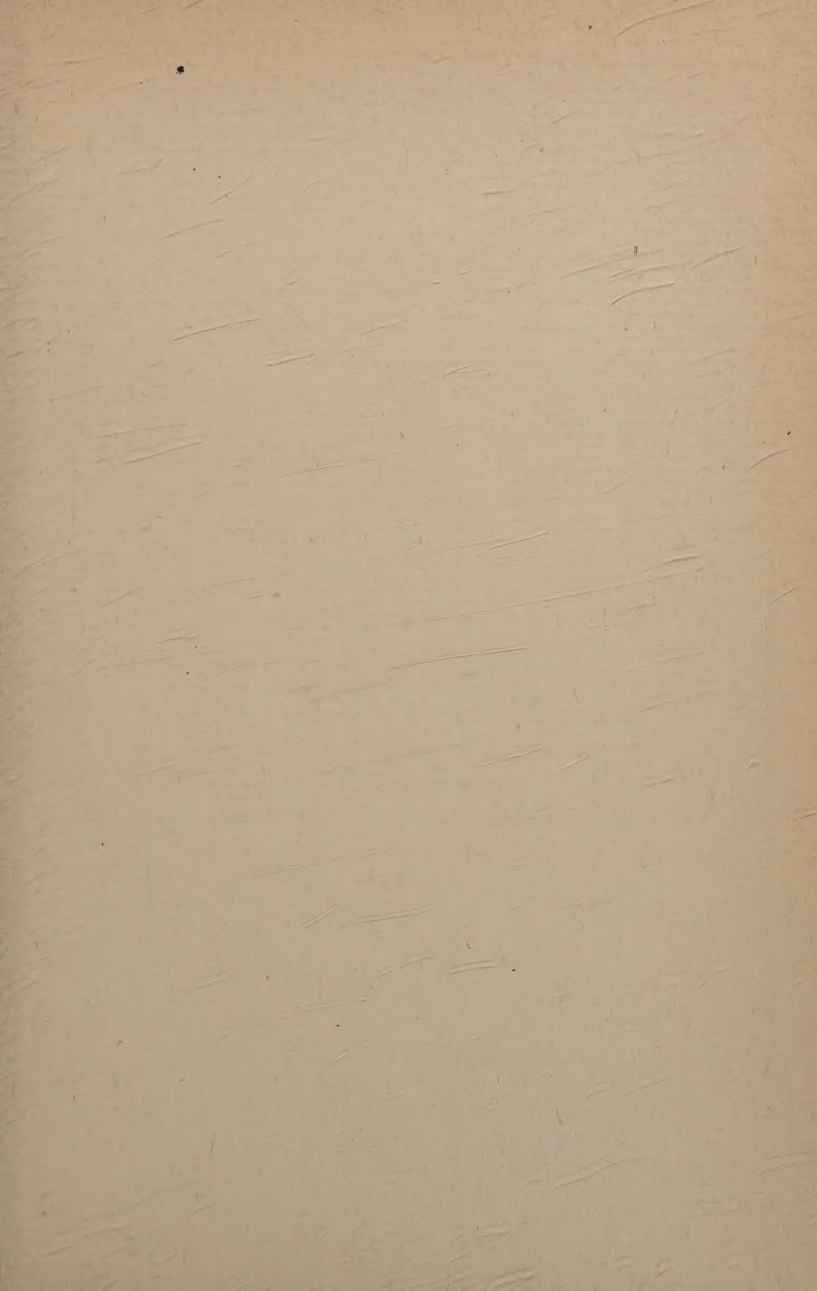
(Written on New Year's Eve).

LIKE a phantom ship to an unknown shore,
With a cargo of mystic freight,
Doth each year depart, when its stay is o'er
At the middle-watch of night;
With her sails unfurled, and her cable taut,
In our port one rides to-day,
And she bears in her hold the work we've wrought
In the twelve months passed away.

The ensign she flies is the Oriflame
Of the Lord of land and sea,
And it seems but as yesterday she came
To be laden by you and me ;
And we've freighted her deep with "wrong" and "right,"
And with memories galore,
And she sails at the hour of twelve to-night,
To the Realm of Nevermore.

May the Ruler who ruleth that silent land—
So mystical, yet so real—
And who holds in the hollow of His hand
The balance of woe and weal ;
When recording the freight we've sent along,
With our "right" weigh all our cares—
Our honest desire to retrieve the "wrong"—
Our weakness—regrets—and prayers.





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